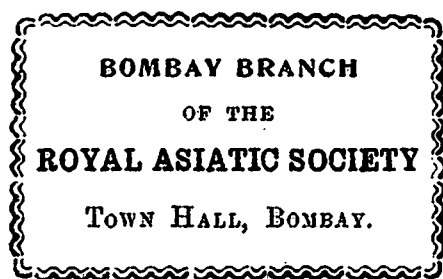




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THE  
LIFE AND DEATH  
OF THE EVER BLESSED  
JESUS CHRIST,  
Saviour of the World.

WITH  
CONSIDERATIONS AND DISCOURSES  
UPON THE SEVERAL PARTS,  
AND  
PRAYERS

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FITTED TO THE SEVERAL MYSTERIES.

BY JEREMY TAYLOR, D. D.  
*Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles the Second.*

VOL. I.



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TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE AND MOST TRULY NOBLE LORD,  
**CHRISTOPHER LORD HATTON,**  
BARON HATTON OF KIRBY, &c.

---

*My Lord,*

*WHEN interest divides the church, and the callentures of men breath out in problems and inactive discourses, each part in pursuance of its own portion follows that proposition which complies with, and bends in all the flexures of its temporal ends; and while all strive for truth, they hug their own opinions dressed up in her imagery, and they dispute for ever, and either the question is indeterminable, or which is worse, men will never be convinced: for such is the nature of disputings, that they begin commonly in mistakes, they proceed with zeal and fancy, and end not at all, but in schisms and uncharitable names, and too often dip their feet in blood; in the mean time, he that gets the better of his adversary, oftentimes gets no good to himself, because although he hath fast hold upon the right side of the problem he may be an ill man in the midst of his triumphant disputations. And therefore it was not here, that God would have man's felicity to grow: for our condition had been extremely miserable, if our final state had been placed upon an uncertain hill, and the way to it had been upon the waters, upon which no spirit but that of contradiction and discord did ever move: for the man should have tended to an end of an uncertain dwelling, and walked to it by ways not dis-*

*cernible, and arrived thither by chance, which because it is irregular, would have discomposed the pleasures of a christian hope, as the very disputing hath already destroyed charity, and disunited the continuity of faith, and in the consequent there would be no virtue, and no felicity. But God who never loved, that man should be too ambitiously busy in imitating his wisdom, (and man lost Paradise for it) is most desirous we should imitate his goodness, and transcribe copies of those excellent emanations from his holiness, whereby as he communicates himself to us in mercies, so he propounds himself imitable by us in graces. And in order to this, God hath described our way plain, certain, and determined; and although he was pleased to leave us indetermined in the questions of exterior communion, yet he put it past all question, that we are bound to be charitable. He hath placed the question of the state of separation in the dark, in hidden and undiscerned regions; but he hath opened the windows of heaven and given great light to us, teaching how we are to demean ourselves in the state of conjunction. Concerning the salvation of Heathens he was not pleased to give us account, but he hath clearly described the duty of Christians, and tells upon what terms alone we shall be saved: and although the not inquiring into the ways of God, and the strict rules of practice hath been instrumental to the preserving them free from the serpentine enfoldings and labyrinths of dispute: yet God also with a great design of mercy hath writ his commandments in so large characters, and engraved them in such tables, that no man can want the records, nor yet skill to read the handwriting upon this*

*wall, if he understands, what he understands, that is, what is placed in his own spirit. For God was therefore desirous that human nature should be perfect with moral, not intellectual excellencies, because these only are of use and compliance with our present state and conjunction. If God had given to eagles an appetite to swim, or to the elephant strong desires to fly, he would have ordered that an abode in the sea and the air respectively should have been proportionable to their manner of living; for so God hath done to man, fitting him with such excellencies which are useful to him in his ways and progress to perfection. A man hath great use and need of justice; and all the instances of morality serve his natural and political ends; he cannot live without them, and be happy: but the filling the rooms of the understanding with airy and ineffective notions, is just such an excellency, as it is in a man to imitate the voice of birds; at his very best, the nightingale shall excel him, and it is of no use to that end, which God designed him in the first intentions of creation.*

*In pursuance of this consideration, I have chosen to serve the purposes of religion by doing assistance to that part of theology which is wholly practical, that which makes us wiser, therefore, because it makes us better. And truly, my Lord, it is enough to weary the spirit of a disputer, that he shall argue till he hath lost his voice, and his time, and sometimes the question too, and yet no man shall be of his mind more than was before. How few turn Lutherans, or Calvinists, or Roman Catholicks from the religion either of their country or interest? Possibly two or three*

*weak or interested, phantastic and easy, prejudicate and effeminate understandings pass from church to church upon grounds as weak as those for which formerly they did dissent, and the same arguments are good or bad as exterior accidents, or interior appetites shall determine. I deny not, but for great causes some opinions are to be quitted; but when I consider how few do forsake any, and when any do, oftentimes they choose the wrong side, and they that take the righter, do it so by contingency, and the advantage also is so little, I believe, that the triumphant persons have but small reason to please themselves in gaining proselytes, since their purchase is so small, and as inconsiderable to their triumph, as it is unprofitable to them who change for the worse, or for the better upon unworthy motives. In all this there is nothing certain, nothing noble: but he that follows the work of God, that is, labours to gain souls, not to a sect, and a subdivision, but to the christian religion, that is, to the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus, hath a promise to be assisted, and rewarded: and all those that go to heaven, are the purchase of such undertakings; the fruit of such culture and labours; for it is only a holy life that lands us there.*

*And now, my Lord, I have told you my reasons, I shall not be ashamed to say that I am weary and toiled with rowing up and down in the seas of questions, which the interests of christendom have commenced: and in many propositions of which I am heartily persuaded, I am not certain that I am not deceived; and I find that men are most confident of those articles which they can so little prove, that they never made questions of them; but I am most certain that by living in the religion and*

*fear of God, in obedience to the King, in the charities and duties of communion with my spiritual guides, in justice and love with all the world in their several proportions, I shall not fail of that end which is perfective of human nature, and which will never be obtained by disputing.*

*Here therefore when I had fixed my thoughts, upon sad apprehensions that God was removing our candlestick, (for why should he not, when men themselves put the light out, and pull the stars from their orbs, so hastening the day of God's judgment?) I was desirous to put a portion of the holy fire into a repository, which might help to re-enkindle the incense, when it shall please God religion shall return, and all his servants sing (in convertendo captivitatem, Sion) with a voice of Eucharist.*

*But now, my Lord, although the results and issues of my retirements and study, do naturally run towards you and carry no excuse for their forwardness, but the confidence that your goodness rejects no emanation of a great affection, yet in this address I am apt to promise to myself a fair interpretation, because I bring you an instrument, and auxiliaries to that devotion, whereby we believe you are dear to God, and know that you are to good men. And if these little sparks of holy fire which I have heaped together do not give life to your prepared and already enkindled spirit, yet they will sometimes help to entertain a thought, to actuate a passion, to employ and hallow a fancy, and put the body of your piety into fermentation, by presenting you with the circumstances and parts of such meditations, which are symbolical to those of your daily office, and which are the *passe temps* of your severest*

*hours. My Lord, I am not so vain to think that in the matter of devotion, and the rules of justice and religion (which is the business of your life), I can add any thing to your heap of excellent things; but I have known and felt comfort by reading, or hearing, from other persons, what I knew myself; and it was unactive upon my spirit till it was made vigorous and effective from without; and in this sense I thought I might not be useless and impertinent.*

*My Lord, I designed to be instrumental to the salvation of all persons that shall read my book; but unless (because souls are equal in their substance, and equally redeemed), we are obliged to wish the salvation of all men, with the greatest, that is, with equal desires, I did intend, in the highest manner I could, to express how much I am to pay to you, by doing the offices of that duty, which although you less need, yet I was most bound to pay, even the duties and charities of religion; having this design, that when posterity (for certainly they will learn to distinguish things and persons) shall see your honoured name employed to separate and rescue these papers from contempt, they may with the more confidence expect in them something fit to be offered to such a personage. My Lord, I have my end, if I serve God and you, and the needs and interests of souls; but shall think my return full of reward, if you shall give me pardon and put me into your litanies, and account me in the number of your relatives and servants; for indeed, my Lord, I am most heartily,*

*Your Lordship's most affectionate,*

*And most obliged Servant,*

*JER. TAYLOR.*



THE  
PREFACE.

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CHRISTIAN Religion hath so many exterior advantages to its reputation and advancement, from the author, and from the ministers, from the fountain of its origination, and the channels of conveyance; (God being the author, the Word incarnate being the great doctor and preacher of it, his life and death being its consignation, the Holy Spirit being the great argument and demonstration of it, and the apostles the organs and conduits of its dissemination) that it were glorious beyond all opposition and disparagement, though we should not consider the excellency of its matter, and the certainty of its probation, and the efficacy of its power, and the perfection and rare accomplishment of its design. But I consider that christianity is therefore very little understood, because it is reproached upon that pretence, which its very being and design does infinitely confute. It is esteemed to be a religion contrary in its principles, or in its precepts to that wisdom, <sup>a</sup> whereby the world is go-

<sup>a</sup> — Fatis accede, Deisque,  
Et cole felices, miseros fuge, sidera terra  
Ut distant, & flamma mari, sic utile recto.  
Sceptrorum vis tota perit, si pendere justa  
Incipit : evertitque arces respectus honesti.  
Libertas scelorum est, quæ regna invisa tuetur,  
Sublatûsque modus gladiis : facere omnia sævè,  
Non impunè licet, nisi dum facis : exeat aula,  
Qui volet esse pius ; virtus & summa potestas  
Non cœunt : Semper metuet quem sæva pudebunt;  
*Lucan. l. 9.*

verned and commonwealths increase, and greatness is acquired, and kings go to war; and our ends of interest as served, and promoted, and that it is an institution so wholly in order to another world, that it does not at all communicate with this, neither in its end, nor in its discourses, neither in the policy, nor in the philosophy: and therefore as the doctrine of the cross was entertained at first in scorn by the Greeks, in offence, and indignation by the Jews; so is the whole system and collective body of christian philosophy esteemed imprudent by the politicks of the world, and flat and irrational by some men of excellent wit and sublime discourse; who because the permissions and dictates of natural, true, and essential reason are at no hand to be contradicted by any superinduced discipline, think, that whatsoever seems contrary to their reason, is also violent to our nature, and offers indeed a good to us, but by ways unnatural and unreasonable. And I think they are very great strangers to the present affairs and persuasions of the world, who know not, that christianity is very much undervalued upon this principle, men insensibly becoming unchristian, because they are persuaded, that much of the greatness of the world is contradicted by the religion. But certainly no mistake can be greater. For the Holy Jesus by his doctrine did instruct the understandings of men, made their appetites more obedient, their reason better principled, and argumentative with less deception, their wills apter for noble choices, their governments more prudent, their present felicities greater, their hopes more excellent, and that duration which was intended to them by their Creator he made manifest to be a state of glory; and all this was to be done and obtained respectively, by the ways of reason and nature, such as God gave to man, then when at first he designed him to a noble, and an immortal condition; the christian law being for the substance of it, nothing but the restitution and

perfection of the law of nature.\* And this I shall represent in all the parts of its natural progression, and I intend it not only as a preface to the following books, but for an introduction and invitation to the whole religion.

For<sup>b</sup> God, when he made the first emanations of his eternal being, and created man as the end of all his productions here below, designed him to an end such as himself was pleased to choose for him, and gave him abilities proportionable to attain that end. God gave man a reasonable and an intelligent nature. And to this noble nature he designed as noble an end; he intended man should live well and happily, in proportion to his appetites, and in the reasonable doing and enjoying those good things which God made him naturally to desire. For since God gave him proper and peculiar appetites with proportion to their own objects, and gave him reason and abilities; not only to perceive the sapidness and relish of those objects, but also to make reflex acts upon such perceptions, and to perceive that they did perceive, which was a rare instrument of pleasure and pain respectively, it is but reasonable to think, that God who created him in mercy, did not only proportion a being to his nature, but did also provide satisfaction for all those appetites and desires which himself had created and put into him. For if he had not, then the being of a man had been nothing but a state of perpetual affliction, and the creation of men had been the greatest unmercifulness in the world, disproportionate objects being mere instances of

\* 'Ουκ Ἰουδαϊσμός ἀλλ' αἰρεσίς τις ἑτέρα (scil. ante diluvium) ἀλλ' ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἡ νῦν πῖσις ἐμπελιτευομένη, ἐν τῇ ἀρτί ἁγία τῷ Θεῷ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὄσα, καὶ ὕστερον πάλιν ἀποκαλυφθεῖσα. *Eriphan. panar. l. 1. tom. 1. num. 5.* Nihil autem magis congruit cum hominis naturâ quàm Christi Philosophia, quæ penè nihil aliud agit quàm ut naturam collapsam suæ restituat innocentiae. *Erasm. in 11 cap. Matth.*

<sup>b</sup> Ratio Dei Deus est humanis rebus consulens, quæ causa est hominibus bene beatæque vivendi, si non concessum sibi manus assumpto Deo negligant. *Chalcid. ad Timæ. 16.*

affliction, and those unsatisfied appetites nothing else but instruments of torment.

Therefore, that this intendment of God and nature should be effected, that is, that man should become happy, it is naturally necessary, that all his regular appetites should have an object appointed them, in the fruition of which felicity must consist. Because nothing is felicity, but when what was reasonably or orderly desired is possessed: for the having what is not desired, or the wanting of what we desire, or the desiring what we should not, are the several constituent parts of infelicity; and it can have no other constitution.

Now the first appetite man had in order to his great end was to be as perfect as he could, that is, to be as like the best thing he knew, as his nature and condition would permit: and although by Adam's fancy and affection to his wife, and by God's appointing fruit for him, we see the lower appetites were first provided for; yet the first appetite which man had, as he distinguishes from lower creatures, was to be like God; (for by that the devil tempted him) and in order to that he had naturally sufficient instruments and abilities. For although by being abused with the devil's sophistry he chose an incompetent instrument, yet because it is naturally certain, that love is the greatest assimilation of the object and the faculty, Adam by loving God might very well approach nearer him according as he could. And it was natural to Adam to love God, who was his Father, his Creator, the fountain of all good to him, and of excellency in himself; and whatsoever is understood to be such, it is as natural for us to love, and we do it for the same reasons, for which we love any thing else, and we cannot love for any other reason, but for one or both these in their proportion apprehended.

\* Ἐν τοῖς φύσει δαί τὸ βέλτιον, ἔαν ἐνδέχεται ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον, ἢ φύσις αἰεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον. *Arist. 2. de celo.*

But because God is not only excellent and good, but by being supreme Lord hath power to give us what laws he please, obedience to his laws therefore becomes naturally, but consequently necessary, when God decrees them, because he does make himself an enemy to all rebels and disobedient sons by affixing penalties to the transgressors: and therefore disobedience is, naturally inconsistent, not only with love to ourselves, because it brings afflictions upon us, but with love to our supreme law-giver; it is contrary to the natural love we bear to God so understood, because it makes him our enemy, whom naturally and reasonably we cannot but love; and therefore also opposite to the first appetite of man, which is to be like God, in order to which we have naturally no instrument but love, and the consequents of love.

And this is not at all to be contradicted by a pretence, that a man does not naturally know, there is a God. Because by the same instrument, by which we know, that the world began, or that there was a first man, by the same we know, that there is a God, and that he also knew it too, and conversed with that God, and received laws from him. For if we discourse of man and the law of nature, and the first appetites, and the first reasons abstractedly, and in their own complexions, and without all their relations and provisions, we discourse jejunely, and falsely, and unprofitably. For as man did not come by chance, nor by himself, but from the universal cause, so we know, that this universal cause did do all that was necessary for him in order to the end he appointed him. And therefore to begin the history of a man's reason, and the philosophy of his nature, it is not necessary for us to place him there, where without the consideration of a God\*, or society, or law, or order he is to be placed, that is, in the state of a

\* Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν εὐρεῖν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἄλλην ἀρχὴν, ἐδὲ ἄλλην γένεσιν, ἢ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς, ἢ τὴν ἐκ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως· ἐπὶ τοῦτον γὰρ δεῖ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀρχὴν ἔχειν εἰ μὴ ἐλλομέν τι εἶναι παρὶ ἀγαθῶν ἢ κακῶν. *Chrysip. de Diis. 3.*

thing rather than a person; but God by revelations and scriptures having helped us with propositions and parts of story relating man's first and real condition, from thence we can take the surest account, and make the most perfect derivation of propositions.

From this first appetite of man to be like God, and the first natural instrument of it, love, descend all the first obligations of religion. In which there are some parts more immediately and naturally expressive; others by superinduction and positive command. Natural religion I call such actions, which either are proper to the nature of the thing we worship, (such as are giving praises to him, and speaking excellent things of him, and praying to him for such things as we need, and a readiness to obey him in whatsoever he commands) or else such as are expressions proportionate to our natures that make them: that is, giving to God the best things we have, and by which we can declare our esteem of his honour and excellency: assigning some portion of our time, of our estate, the labours of our persons, the increase of our store, first fruits<sup>a</sup>, sacrifices, oblations, and tithes; which therefore God rewards, because he hath allowed to our natures no other instruments of doing him honour, but by giving to him in some manner, which we believe honourable and apt, the best thing we have.

The next appetite a man hath, is to beget one like himself, God having implanted that appetite into man for the propagation of mankind, and given it as his first blessing and permission. *It is not good for man to be alone*, and, *Increase and multiply*. And<sup>b</sup> Artemidorus had something of this doctrine, when he reckons these two laws of nature, Deum colere, mulieribus vinci, to worship God, and to be overcome by women, in proportion to his two first appetites of

<sup>a</sup> Σπένδειν ἢ θύειν, ἢ ἀπάρχεσθαι κατὰ τὰ πάτρια, ἐκάστοις προσήκει καθαρῶς, ἢ μὴ ἐπισευσμένως, μηδὲ ἀμελῶς, μηδὲ γλισχρῶς, μηδὲ ὑπὲρ δύναμιν. *Epict. c. 38.*

<sup>b</sup> De somn. sign.

nature, To be like God, and to have another like himself. This appetite God only made regular by his first provisions of satisfaction. He gave to man a woman for a wife, for the companion of his sorrows, for the instrument of multiplication, and yet provided him but of one, and intimated he should have no more: which we do not only know by an after revelation, the Holy Jesus having declared it to have been God's purpose, but <sup>a</sup> Adam himself understood it, as appears by his first discourses at the entertainment of his new bride. And although there were permissions afterward of polygamy, yet there might have been a greater pretence of necessity at first, because of enlarging and multiplying fountains rather than channels; and three or four at first would have enlarged mankind by greater proportion than many more afterwards; little distances near the centre make greater and larger figures, than when they part near the fringes of the circle; and therefore those after permissions were to avoid a greater evil, not a hallowing of the license, but a reproach of their infirmity. And certainly the multiplication of wives is contrariant to that design of love and endearment, which God intended at first between man and wife.

<sup>b</sup> *Connubia mille:*

*Non illis generis nexus, non pignora curæ,  
Sed numero languet pietas. —*

And amongst them that have many wives, <sup>c</sup> *the relation and necessity is trifling and loose, and they are all equally contemptible, because the mind entertains no loves or union, where the object is multiplied, and the act unfixed and distracted.* So that this having a great commodity in order to man's great end, that is, of

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 2, 24.

<sup>b</sup> Claudian, bell. Gildon. Salust. Jugurth.

<sup>c</sup> ———— ὁδὸν γὰρ καλὴν  
 Δυσὶν γυναικοῖν ἀνδρὶ ἐν ἡνίας ἔχειν  
 Ἄλλ' εἰς μίαν βλέποντες εὐνάϊαν κύπρην  
 Στέργυσιν, ὅς τις μὴ κακῶς εἰκὲν θέλη.

*Eurip.*

living well and happily, seems to be intended by God in the nature of things and instruments natural and reasonable towards man's end ; and therefore to be a law, if not natural, yet at least positive and superinduced at first, in order to man's proper end. However, by the provision which God made for satisfaction of this appetite of nature, all those actions which deflect and err from the order of this end, are unnatural and inordinate, and not permitted by the concession of God, nor the order of the thing ; but such actions only, which naturally produce the end of this provision and satisfaction, are natural, regular and good.

But by this means man grew into a society and a family, and having productions of his own kind, which he naturally desired, and therefore loved, he was consequently obliged to assist them in order to their end, that they might become like him, that is, perfect men, and brought up to the same state ; and they also by being at first impotent, and for ever after <sup>a</sup>beneficiaries and obliged persons, are for the present subject to their parents, and for ever after bound to duty, because there is nothing which they can do, that can directly produce so great a benefit to the parents, as they have to the children. From hence naturally descend all those mutual obligations between parents and children, which are instruments of protection and benefit on the one side, and duty and obedience on the other, and all these to be expressed according as either of their necessities shall require, or any stipulation or contract shall appoint, or shall be superinduced by any positive laws of God or man.

In natural descent of the generations of man this one first family was multiplied so much, that for convenience they were forced to divide their dwellings, and this they did by families especially, the great

<sup>a</sup> Nihil enim est liberis proprium, quod non parentum sit prius, qui aut de suo dederant, acquirendi præbuerant causas. *Philo.*



Father being the major domo to all his minors. And this division of dwellings, although it kept the same form and power in the several families, which were in the original, yet it introduced some new necessities, which although they varied in the instance, yet were to be determined by such instruments of reason, which were given to us at first upon foresight of the public necessities of the world. And when the families came to be divided, that their common parent being extinct, no master of a family had power over another master; the rights of such men and their natural power became equal, because there was nothing to distinguish them, and because they might do equal injury, and invade each other's possessions, and disturb their peace and surprise their liberty. And so also was their power of doing benefit equal, though not the same in kind. But God who made man a sociable creature, because he knew it was not good for him to be alone, so dispensed the abilities and possibilities of doing good, that in some thing or other every man might need or be benefited by <sup>a</sup> every man, therefore that they might pursue the end of nature, and their own appetites of living well and happily, they were forced to consent to such contracts which might secure and supply to every one those good things without which he could not live happily. Both the appetites, the irascible and the concupiscible, fear of evil, and desire of benefit, were the sufficient endearments of contracts, of societies, and republics. <sup>b</sup> And upon this stock were decreed and hallowed all those propositions, without which bodies politic and societies of men cannot be happy. And in the transaction of these, many accidents daily happening, it grew still reasonable, that is, necessary to the end of living happily, that all those after obligations should be observed with the proportion of the same faith and

<sup>a</sup> Animus inveniet liberalitatis materiam, etiam inter angustias paupertis. *Seneca de benefic. c. 1.*

<sup>b</sup> Commoda præterea patriæ tibi prima putare. *Lucilius.*

endearment, which bound the first contracts. For though the natural law be always the same, yet some parts of it are primely necessary, others by supposition and accident, and both are of the same necessity, that is, equally necessary in the several cases. Thus, to obey a King is as necessary and naturally reasonable as to obey a father; that is, supposing there be a King, as it is certain naturally a man cannot be, but a father must be supposed. If it be made necessary that I promise, it is also necessary, that I perform it: for else I shall return to that inconvenience, which I sought to avoid, when I made the promise; and though the instance be very far removed from the first necessities and accidents of our prime being, and production; yet the reason still pursues us, and natural reason reaches up to the very last minutes, and orders the most remote particulars of our well being.

Thus; not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to kill, are very reasonable prosecutions of the great end of nature, of living well and happily. But when a man is said to steal, when to be a murderer, when to be incestuous, the natural law doth not teach in all cases; but when the superinduced constitution hath determined the particular law, by natural reason we are obliged to observe it. Because though the civil power makes the instance, and determines the particular, yet right reason makes the sanction and passes the obligation. The law of nature makes the major proposition, but the civil constitution, or any superinduced law makes the assumption in a practical syllogism. To kill is not murder, but to kill such persons, whom I ought not. It was not murder among the Jews to kill a manslayer, before he entered a city of refuge: to kill the same man after his entry, was. \* Among the Romans to kill an adulteress or a ravisher in the act, was lawful, with us it is murder. Murder, and incest, and theft, always were unlawful,

\* A Gellius. l. 10. 23.

but the same actions were not always the same crimes. And it is just with these as with disobedience, which was ever criminal; but the same thing was not estimated to be obedience; nor indeed could any thing be so; till the sanction of a superior had given the instance of obedience. So for theft; to catch fish in rivers, or deer, or pigeons, when they were esteemed *feræ naturæ*, of a wild condition, and so *primò occupantis*, was lawful, just as to take or kill badgers' or foxes, and beavers and lions. But when the laws had appropriated rivers, and divided shores, and imparked deer, and housed pigeons, it became theft to take them without leave. To despoil the Egyptians was not theft, when God, who is the Lord of all possessions, had bidden the Israelites. But to do so now were the breach of the natural law, and of a divine commandment. For the natural law (I said) is eternal in the sanction, but variable in the instance and the expression. And indeed the laws of nature are very few: they were but two at first, and but two at last, when the great change was made from families to kingdoms. The first is to do duty to God. The second is to do to ourselves and our neighbours, that is, to our neighbours as to ourselves, all these actions, which naturally, reasonably, or by institution or emergent necessity are in order to a happy life. Our blessed Saviour reduces all the law to these two. 1. *Love the Lord with all thy heart.* 2. *Love thy neighbour as thyself.* In which I observe in verification of my former discourse<sup>a</sup>, that love is the first natural bond of duty to God, and so also it is to our neighbour. And therefore all intercourse with our neighbour was founded in, and derived from the two greatest endearments of love in the world. A man came to have a neighbour by being a husband and a father.

So that still there are but two great natural laws,

<sup>a</sup> Num. 4.

binding us in our relations to God and man, we remaining essentially, and by the very design of creation obliged to God in all, and to our neighbours in the proportions of equality [as thyself:] that is, that he be permitted and promoted in the order to his living well and happily as thou art; for love being there, not an affection, but the duty that results from the first natural bands of love, which began neighbourhood, signifies justice, equality and such reasonable proceedings which are in order to our common end of a happy life, and is the same with that other, Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you to them, and that is, certainly the greatest and most effective love, because it best promotes that excellent end, which God designed for our natural perfection. All other particulars are but prosecutions of these two, that is, of the order of nature: save only, that there is a third law; which is a part of love too, it is self-love, and therefore is rather supposed, than at the first expressed, because a man is reasonably to be presumed to have in him a sufficient stock of self-love to serve the ends of his nature and creation, and that is, that man demean and use his own body in that decorum, which is most orderly and proportionate to his perfective end of a happy life; which christian religion calls [sobriety] and it is a prohibition of those uncharitable, self-destroying sins of drunkenness, gluttony, and inordinate and unreasonable manners of lust, destructive of nature's intendments, or at least no ways promoting them. For it is naturally lawful to satisfy any of these desires, when the desire does not carry the satisfaction beyond the design of nature, that is, to the violation of health, or that happy living, which consists in observing those contracts which mankind thought necessary to be made in order to the same great end; unless where God hath superinduced a restraint, making an instance of sobriety to become an act of religion, or to pass into an expression of duty to him: but then it is not a natural, but a religious

sobriety, and may be instanced in fasting or abstinence from some kinds of meat, or some times or manners of conjugation. These are the three natural laws described in the christian doctrine, that we live; 1. Godly, 2. Soberly, 3. Righteously. And the particulars of the first are ordinarily to be determined by God immediately, or his vicegerents, and by reason observing and complying with the accidents of the world, and dispositions of things and persons. The second by the natural order of nature, by sense, and by experience; and the third by human contracts and civil laws.

The result of the preceding discourse is this. Man who was designed by God to a happy life, was fitted with sufficient means to attain that end, so that he might, if he would, be happy; but he was a free agent, and so might choose. And it is possible, that man may fail of his end, and be made miserable by God, by himself, or by his neighbour. Or by the same persons he may be made happy in the same proportions, as they relate to him. If God be angry or disobeyed, he becomes our enemy, and so we fail: if our neighbour be injured or impeded in the direct order to his happy living, he hath equal right against us, as we against him, and so we fail that way: and if I be intemperate, I grow sick and worsted in some faculty, and so I am unhappy in myself. But if I obey God, and do right to my neighbour, and confine myself within the order and design of nature, I am secured in all ends of blessing, in which I can be assisted by these three, that is, by all my relatives, there being no end of man designed by God in order to his happiness, to which these are not proper and sufficient instruments. Man can have no other relations, no other discourses, no other regular appetites, but what are served and satisfied by religion, by sobriety, and by justice. There is nothing, whereby we can relate to any person, who can hurt us, or do us benefit, but is

provided for in these three. These therefore are all, and these are sufficient.

But now it is to be enquired how these become laws obliging us to sin if we transgress, even before any positive law of God be superinduced; for else, how can it be a natural law, that is, a law obliging all nations, and all persons, even such who have had no intercourse with God by way of special revelation, and have lost all memory of tradition? For either such persons, whatsoever they do, shall obtain that end, which God designed for them in their nature, that is, a happy life according to the duration of an immortal nature: or else they shall perish for prevaricating of these laws. And yet if they were no laws to them, and decreed and made sacred by sanction, promulgation and appendant penalties, they could not so oblige them, as to become the rule of virtue or vice.

When God gave us natural reason, that is, sufficient ability to do all, that should be necessary to live well and happily, he also knew, that some appetites might be irregular, just as some stomachs would be sick, and some eyes blind; and a man being a voluntary agent might choose an evil with as little reason as the angels of darkness did, that is, they might do unreasonably because they would do so, and then a man's understanding should serve him but as an instrument of mischief, and his will carry him on to it with a blind and impotent desire, and then the beautiful order of creatures would be discomposed by unreasonableness and unconsidering or evil persons. And therefore it was most necessary, that man should have his appetites confined within the designs of nature, and the order to his end; for a will without the restraint of a superior power or a perfect understanding, is like a knife in a child's hand, as apt for mischief as for use. Therefore it pleased God to bind man by the signature of laws to observe those great natural

reasons, without which man could not arrive at the great end of God's designing, that is, he could not live well and happily. God therefore made it the first law to love him, and which is all one, to worship him, to speak honour of him, and to express it in all our ways, the chief whereof is obedience. And this we find in the instance of that positive precept, which God gave to Adam, which was nothing but a particular of the great general; but in this there is little scruple, because it is not imaginable, that God would in any period of time not take care, that himself be honoured, his glory being the very end why he made man; and therefore it must be certain, that this did at the very first pass into a law.

But concerning this and other things, which are usually called natural laws, I consider, that the things themselves were such, that the doing them was therefore declared to be a law, because the not doing them did certainly bring a punishment proportionable to the crime, that is, a just deficiency from the end of creation, from a good and happy life, 2. and also a punishment of a guilty conscience; which I do not understand to be a fear of hell, or of any supervening penalty, unless the conscience be accidentally instructed into such fears by experience, or revelation; but it is a *malum in genere rationis*, a disease or evil of the reasonable faculty, that, as there is a rare content in the discourses of reason, there is a satisfaction, an acquiescency like that of creatures in their proper place and definite actions, and competent perfections; so in prevaricating the natural law there is a dissatisfaction; a disease, a removing out of the place, an inquietness of spirit, even when there is no monitor, or observer. *Adco facinora atque flagitia sua ipsi quoque in supplicium verterant. Neque frustra pæstantissimus [Plato] sapientiæ firmare solitus est, si recludantur Tyrannorum mentes posse aspici laniatus & ictus, quando ut corpora*

*veheribus, ita sævitiâ, libidine, malis consultis animus dilaceretur*, said <sup>a</sup>Tacitus out of <sup>b</sup>Plato, whose words are: 'Ἀλλὰ πολλάκις τῇ μεγάλῃ βασιλείῳ ἐπιλαβόμενος, ἢ ἄλλῃ ὁποσοῦν βασιλείῳ, ἢ δυνάσει καλεῖσθαι ἔδεν ὑγιὲς ὃν τῆς ψυχῆς, ἀλλὰ διαμασιγερμένην, καὶ ἑλῶν μεσῇ, ὑπὸ ἐπιτορκιῶν καὶ ἀδικίας.] It is naturally certain, that the cruelty of tyrants, torments themselves, and is a hook in their nostrils, and a <sup>c</sup>scourge to their spirit, and the pungency of forbidden lust is truly a thorn in the flesh, full of anguish and secret vexation.

<sup>d</sup> *Quid demens manifesta negas? En pectus inustæ  
Deformant maculæ, vitisq̃ue inolevit imago,*

said Claudian of Ruffinus. And it is certain to us, and verified by the experience and observation of all wise nations, though not naturally demonstrable, that this secret punishment is sharpened and promoted in degrees by the hand of heaven, the finger of the same hand, that writ the law in our understandings?

But the prevarications of the natural law have also their portion of a special punishment besides the scourge of an unquiet spirit; the man that disturbs his neighbour's rest, meets with disturbances himself, and since I have naturally no more power over my neighbour than he hath over me (unless he descended naturally from me) he hath an equal privilege to defend himself, and to secure his quiet by disturbing the order of my happy living, as I do his. And this equal permission is certainly so great a sanction and signature of the law of justice; that in the just proportion of my receding from the reasonable prosecution of my end, in the same proportion and degree of my own infelicity is become certain; and this in several degrees up to the loss of all, that is, of life itself; for where no further duration or differing state is known, there

<sup>a</sup> Annal. 6.      <sup>b</sup> In Gorgias.

<sup>c</sup> Lucian. in Catapl. Radamanth. Ὅποσα ἂν τις ὑμῶν ποτὴρ ἐργάσθαι παρὰ τοῦ θιόν, καὶ ἑκάστων αὐτῶν ἀφανὴ σίγμματα ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς περιφέρει.

<sup>d</sup> Claudian. de Ruffin.



death is ordinarily esteemed the greatest infelicity; where something beyond it is known, there also it is known, that such prevarication makes that further duration to be unhappy. So that an affront is naturally punished by an affront, the loss of a tooth with the loss of a tooth, of an eye with an eye, the violent taking away of another man's goods by the loosing my own. For I am liable to as great an evil as I infer, and naturally he is not unjust that inflicts it. And he that is drunk is a fool or a madman for the time, and that is his punishment, and declares the law and the sin: and so in proportions to the transgressions of sobriety. But when the first of the natural laws is violated, that is, God is disobeyed or dishonoured, or when the greatest of natural evils is done to our neighbour, then death became the penalty; to the first, in the first period of the world: to the second, at the restitution of the world, that is, at the beginning of the second period. He that did attempt to kill, from the beginning of ages might have been resisted, and killed, if the assaulted could not else be safe; but he that killed actually as Cain did, could not be killed himself, till the law was made in Noah's time, because there was no person living, that had equal power on him, and had been naturally injured; while the thing was doing, the assailant and the assailed had equal power, but when it was done and one was killed, he that had the power or right of killing his murderer, is now dead, and his power is extinguished with the man. But after the flood the power was put into the hand of some trusted person, who was to take the forfeiture. And thus I conceive these natural reasons in order to their proper end became laws, and bound fast by the band of annexed and consequent penalties; *metum prorsus & noxam consciente pro fœdere haberi*, said Tacitus. And that fully explains my sense.

And thus death was brought into the world, not by every prevarication of any of the laws, by any instance of unreasonableness: for in proportion to the

evil of the action, would be the evil of the suffering, which in all cases would not arrive at death; as every injury, every intemperance, should not have been capital. But some things were made evil by a superinduced prohibition, as eating one kind of fruit; some things were evil by inordination: the first was morally evil, the second was evil naturally. Now the first sort brought in death by a prime sanction; the second, by degrees and variety of accident. For every disobedience and transgression of that law, which God made as the instance of our doing him honour and obedience, is an integral violation of all the band between him and us; it does not grow in degrees according to the instance and subject matter; for it is as great a disobedience to eat when he hath forbidden us, as to offer to climb to heaven with an ambitious tower. And therefore it is but reasonable for us to fear, and just in him to make us at once suffer death, which is the greatest of natural evils, for disobeying him. To which death, we may arrive by degrees, in doing actions against the reasonableness of sobriety and justice, but cannot arrive by degrees of disobedience to God, or irreligion; because every such act deserves the worst of things, but the other naturally deserves no greater evil than the proportion of their own inordination, till God by a superinduced law hath made them also to become acts of disobedience as well as inordination; that is, morally evil, as well as naturally; For <sup>a</sup> *by the law* (saith St. Paul) *sin became exceeding sinful*, that is, had a new degree of obliquity added to it. But this was not at first. For therefore (saith St. Paul) before or <sup>b</sup> *until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law*: Meaning, that those sins which were forbidden by Moses's law were actually in the manners of men and the customs of the world, but they were not imputed, that is, to such personal punishments and consequent evils,

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 7. 13.<sup>b</sup> Rom. 5. 13.

which afterwards those sins did introduce, because those sins which were only evil by inordination, and discomposure of the order of man's end of living happily, were made unlawful upon no other stock, but that God would have man to live happily, and therefore gave him reason to effect that end; and if a man became unreasonable, and did things contrary to his end, it was impossible for him to be happy, that is, he should be miserable in proportion. But in that degree and manner of evil they were imputed; and that was sanction enough to raise natural reason up to the constitution of a law.

3. The law of nature being thus decreed and made obligatory, was a sufficient instrument of making man happy, that is, in producing the end of his creation. But as Adam had evil discourses and irregular appetites before he fell, (for they made him fall) and as the angels, who had no original sin, yet they chose evil at the first, when it was wholly arbitrary in them to do so or otherwise; so did man. *God made man upright, and he sought out many inventions.* Some men were ambitious, and by incompetent means would make their brethren to be their servants. Some were covetous, and would usurp that, which by an earlier distinction had passed into private possession, and then they made new principles, and new discourses, such which were reasonable in order to their private indirect ends, but not to the public benefit, and therefore would prove unreasonable and mischievous to themselves at last.

And when once they broke the order of creation, it is easy to understand by what necessities of consequence they run into many sins and irrational proceedings. \*Ælian tells of a nation, who had a law binding them to beat their parents to death with clubs, when they lived to a decrepid and unprofitable age. The Persian Magi mingled with their mothers and

\* Τὴν τῶν ἱδρῶν ἐξηγγίσταται dixit Porphyrius.

all their nearest relatives: And by a law of the Venetians (says <sup>a</sup> Bodinus) a son in banishment was redeemed from the sentence, if he killed his banished Father. And in <sup>b</sup> Homer's time there were a sort of pirates, who professed robbing, and did account it honourable. But the great prevarications of the laws of nature were in the first commandment; when the tradition concerning God was derived by a long line, and there were no visible remonstrances of an extraordinary power, they were quickly brought to believe, that he, whom they saw not, was not at all, especially being prompted to it by pride, tyranny, and a loose imperious spirit. Others fell to low opinions concerning God, and made such as they list of their own, and they were like to be strange Gods, which were of man's making. When man either maliciously or carelessly became unreasonable in the things that concerned God, God was pleased to *'give him over to a reprobate mind*, that is, an unreasonable understanding, and false principles concerning himself and his neighbour, that his sin against the natural law, might become its own punishment, by discomposing his natural happiness. Atheism and idolatry brought in all unnatural lusts and many unreasonable injustices. And this we learn from St. Paul, *They did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient*, that is, incongruities towards the end of their creation; and so they became *full of unrighteousness, lust, covetousness, malice, envy, strife, and murder, disobedient to parents, breakers of covenants, unnatural in their affections* and in their passions; and all this was the consequent of breaking the first natural law.

<sup>a</sup> De rep. l. 1. c. 4.

<sup>b</sup> Οὐκ ἄρα ἔστιν ἢ παρὰ τοῖς παλαιοῖς τὸ ληστέειν, ἀλλ' ἐνδοξόν. Scholiast. in Hom. Odys. τ. Vide etiam A. Gel. l. 11. c. 18. Ὅσοι ὑπὸ ἀκαθάρτου πνεύματος ἐμπεφορμῶνται ἢ ὑπὸ φάουλῃς ἀναστροφῆς ἢ ἐνδῶν φαύλων ἢ τόμων πονηρῶν διαφθαγέντες τὰς φυσικὰς ἐνοίας ἀπώλεσαν. Just. Mart. Dial. Tryph.

<sup>c</sup> Rom. 1. 25, 26, &c.

*They changed the truth of God into a lie. For this cause God gave them up into vile affections.*

Now God who takes more care for the good of man, than man does for his own, did not only imprint these laws in the hearts and understandings of man, but did also take care to make this light shine clear enough to walk by, by adopting some instances of the natural laws into religion. Thus the law against murder became a part of religion in the time of Noah; and some other things were then added concerning worshipping God, against idolatry, and against unnatural and impure mixtures. Sometimes God super-added judgments, as to the twenty-three thousand Assyrians for fornication. For although these punishments were not threatened to the crime in the sanction and expression of any definite law, and it could not naturally arrive to it by its inordination, yet it was as agreeable to the divine justice to inflict it, as to inflict the pains of hell upon evil livers, who yet had not any revelation of such intolerable danger; for it was sufficient that God had made such crimes to be against their very nature, and they, who will do violence to their nature, to do themselves hurt, and to displease God, deserve to lose the title to all those good things, which God was pleased to design for man's final condition. And because it grew habitual, customary, and of innocent reputation, it pleased God to call this precept out of the darkness, whither their evil customs and false discourses had put it, and by such an extraordinary but very signal punishment to remind them, that the natural permissions of concubinate were only confined to the ends of mankind, and were hallowed only by the faith and the design of marriage. And this was signified by St. Paul, in these words, *They that sin without the law shall also perish without the law*: That is, by such judgments, which God hath inflicted on evil livers in several periods of the world,

irregularly indeed, not signified in kind, but yet sent into the world with designs of a great mercy, that the ignorances and prevarications, and partial abolitions of the natural law might be cured and restored, and by the dispersion of prejudices, the state of natural reason be redintegrate.

Whatsoever was besides this, was accidental and emergent, such as were the discourses of wise men, which God raised up in several countries and ages, as Job, and Eliphaz, and Bildad, and those of the families of the patriarchs dispersed into several countries; and constant tradition in some noble and more eminent descents; and yet all this was so little and imperfect, not in itself, but in respect of the thick cloud man had drawn before his understanding, that darkness covered the face of the earth in a great proportion. Almost all the world were idolaters, and when they had broken the first of the natural laws, the breach of the other was not only naturally consequent, but also by divine judgment it descended infallibly. And yet God pitying mankind, did not only still continue the former remedies, and added blessings, *giving them fruitful seasons, and filling their hearts with food and gladness*, so leaving the nations without excuse, but also made a very noble change in the world; for having chosen an excellent family, the fathers of which lived exactly according to the natural law, and with observation of those few superadded precepts, in which God did specificate their prime duty, having swelled that family to a great nation, and given them possession of an excellent land, which God took from seven nations, because they were egregious violators of the natural law, was pleased to make a very great restitution and declaration of the natural law in many instances of religion and justice, which he framed into positive precepts, and adopted them into the family of the first original instances, making them as necessary in the particulars, as they were in the primary obligation; but the instances were such, whereof some

did relate only to the present constitution of the common-wealth; others to such universal contracts, which obliged all the world by reason of the equal necessity of all mankind to admit them. And these himself writ on tables of stone, and dressed up their nation into a body politic by an excellent system of politic laws, and adorned it with a rare religion, and left this nation as a piece of leaven in a mass of dough, not only to do honour to God, and happiness to themselves by those instruments, which he had now very much explicated, but also to transmit the same reasonable propositions into other nations; and he therefore multiplied them a great necessity of a dispersion, that they might serve the ends of God and of the natural law by their ambulatory life, and their numerous disseminations. And this was it, which St. Paul affirms; *\* the law was added because of transgression*: meaning, that because men did transgress the natural, God brought Moses's law into the world to be as a strand to the inundation of impiety. And thus the world stood, till the fulness of time was come; for so we are taught by the apostle, [*The law was added because of transgression,*] but the date of this was to expire at a certain period; it was added to serve but [*till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.*]

For because Moses's law was but an imperfect explication of the natural; there being divers parts of the three laws of nature not at all explicated by that covenant, not the religion of prayers, not the reasonableness of temperance and sobriety in opinion and diet, and in the more noble instances of humanity and doing benefit, it was so short, that as St. Paul says, *The law could not make the comers thereunto perfect*; and which was most of all considerable, it was confined to a nation, and the other parts of mankind had made so little use of the records of that nation, that

\* Gal. 3. 19.

all the world was placed *in darkness, and sat in the shadow of death*; therefore it was, that in great mercy God sent his Son, *a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people Israel*; to instruct those, and consummate these, that the imperfection of the one, and the mere darkness of the other might be illustrated by the sun of righteousness. And this was by restoring the light of nature, (which they by evil customs and false principles and evil laws had obscured) by restoring man to the liberty of his spirit, by freeing him from the slavery of sin, under which they were so lost and oppressed, that all their discourses and conclusions, some of their moral philosophy, and all their habitual practices, were but servants of sin, and made to co-operate to that end, not which God intended as perfective of human nature, but which the devil and vicious persons superinduced to serve little ends and irregular, and to destroy the greater.

For certain it is, <sup>a</sup> Christianity is nothing else, but the most perfect design that ever was to make a man be happy in his whole capacity; and as the law was to the Jews, so was philosophy to the Gentiles, a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, to teach them the rudiments of happiness, and the first and lowest things of reason, that when Christ was come, all mankind might become perfect, that is, be made regular in their appetites, wise in their understandings, assisted in their duties, directed to and instructed in their great ends; and this is that which the apostle calls [*being perfect men in Christ Jesus,*] perfect in all the intendments of nature, and in all the designs of God. And this was brought to pass by discovering, and restoring, and improving the law of nature, and by turning it all into religion.

For the natural law being a sufficient and a proportionate instrument and means to bring a man to the end designed in his creation, and this law being

<sup>a</sup> Clem. Alex. Stromat. 1. c. 3.



eternal and unalterable (for it ought to be as lasting and as unchangeable as the nature itself, so long as it was capable of law) it was not imaginable, that the body of any law should make a new morality, new rules, and general proportions, either of justice, or religion, or temperance, or felicity; the essential parts of all these consisting in natural proportions, and means towards the consummation of man's last end, which was first intended, and is always the same. It is as if there were a new truth in an essential and a necessary proposition. For although the instances may vary, there can be no new justice, no new temperance, no new relations, proper and natural relations and intercourses between God and us, but what always were in praises and prayers, in adoration and honour, and in the symbolical expressions of God's glory and our needs.

Hence it comes that, that which is the most obvious and notorious appellative of the law of nature, (that it is a law written in our hearts) was also recounted as one of the glories and excellencies of christianity. <sup>a</sup> Plutarch saying, that Kings ought to be governed by laws, explains himself that this law must be a word, not written in books and tables, but dwelling in the mind, a living rule, the interior guide of their manners, and monitors of their life. And this was the same which St. Paul expresses to be the guide of the Gentiles, that is, of all men naturally. <sup>b</sup> *The Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, which shews the work of the law written in their hearts.* And that we may see it was the law of nature, that returned in the sanctions of christianity; God declares that in the constitution of this law he would take no other course than at first, that is, he would write them in the hearts of men:

<sup>a</sup> οὐκ ἐν βιβλίῳ ἔστι γεγραμμένον, ἀλλ' ἐν ᾧ ὁ νόμος, ἀλλ' ἑμψυχὸς ὢν ταῦτα λόγῳ αἰεὶ συνηκῶν  
ἡ καρδιά τοις νόμοις τῆς φύσεως ἢ τῶν ἐρημῶν κηδεμονίας.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. 2. 14.

indeed with a new style, with a quill taken from the wings of the holy dove; the spirit of God was to be the great engraver, and the scribe of the new covenant, but the hearts of men should be the tables. *\* For this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and into their minds will I write them, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more:* That is, I will provide a means to expiate all the iniquities of man, and restore him to the condition of his first creation, putting him into the same order towards felicity, which I first designed to him, and that also by the same instruments. Now I consider, that the spirit of God took very great care, that all the records of the law of Jesus should be carefully kept and transmitted to posterity in books and sermons, which being an act of providence and mercy, was a provision, lest they should be lost or mistaken as they were formerly, when God writ some of them in tables of stone for the use of the sons of Israel, and all of them in the first tables of nature with the finger of creation, as now he did in the new creature by the finger of the Spirit. But then writing them in the tables of our minds (besides the other) can mean nothing, but placing them there, where they were before, and from whence we blotted them by the mixtures of impure principles and discourses. But I descend to particular and more minute considerations.

The laws of nature either are bands of religion, justice, or sobriety. Now I consider concerning religion, that whenever God hath made any particular precepts to a family, as to Abraham's; or to a single person, as to the man of Judah prophesying against the altar of Bethel; or to a nation, as to the Jews at Sinai; or to all mankind, as to the world descending from Noah, it was nothing else but a trial or an instance of our obedience, a particular prosecution of

\* Heb. 10. 16, 17.

the law of nature, whereby we are obliged to do honour to God, which was to be done by such expressions, which are natural intercourses between God and us, or such as he hath made to be so. Now in Christianity we are wholly left to that manner of prosecuting this first natural law, which is natural and proportionable to the nature of the thing, which the holy Jesus calls *worshipping God in spirit and truth*; *In spirit*] that is, with our souls heartily and devoutly, so as to exclude hypocrisy and indifferency. And *in truth*] that is, without a lie, without vain imaginations and fantastic resemblances of him, which were introduced by the evil customs of the Gentiles; and without such false guises and absurd undecencies, which as they are contrary to man's reason, so are they contrary to the glory and reputation of God; such as was the universal custom of all nations of sacrificing in man's blood, and offering festival lusts and impurities in the solemnities of their religion; for these being against the purpose and design of God, and against right reason, are a lie, and enemies to the truth of a natural and proper religion. The holy Jesus only commanded us to pray often, and to praise God, to speak honour of his name, not to use it lightly and vainly, to believe him, to revere the instruments and ministers of religion, to ask for what we need, to put our trust in God, to worship him, to obey him, and to love him; for all these are but the expressions of love. And this is all Christ spake concerning the first natural law, the law of religion. For concerning the ceremonies or sacraments, which he instituted, they are but few, and they become matter of duty but by accident, as being instruments and rites of consigning those effects and mercies, which God sent to the world by the means of this law, and relate rather to the contract and stipulation, which Christ made for us, than to the natural order between duty and felicity.

Now all these are nothing but what we are taught by natural reason, that is, what God enabled us to understand to be fit instruments of intercourse between God and us, and what was practised and taught by sober men in all ages and all nations, whose records we have received (as I shall remark at the margin of the several precepts.) For to make these appear certainly and naturally necessary there was no more requisite, but that man should know there was a God, that is, an eternal being, which gave him all that he had or was, and to know what himself was, that is, indigent and necessitous of himself, needing help of all the creatures, exposed to accidents and calamity, and defensible no ways but by the same hand that made him; creation and conservation, in the philosophy of all the world, being but the same act continuing and flowing on him from an instant to duration, as a line from its mathematical point. And for this, God took sufficient care, for he conversed with man in the very first, in such clear and certain and perceptible transaction, that a man could as certainly know, that God was, as that man was. And in all ages of the world he hath not left himself without witness, but gave such testimonies of himself, <sup>a</sup> that were sufficient; for they did actually persuade all nations, barbarous and civil, into the belief of a God. And it is but a nicety to consider, whether or no that proposition can be naturally demonstrated. For it was sufficient to all God's purposes and to all man's, that the proposition was actually believed; the instances were therefore sufficient to make faith, because they did it. And a man may remove himself so far from all the degrees of aptness to believe a proposition, that nothing shall make them join. For if there were a sect of witty men, that durst not believe their senses, because they thought them fallible;

<sup>a</sup> Maxim. Tyr. Dissert. ταῦτα ὁ Ἕλλην λέγει, καὶ ὁ Ἑβραῖος λέγει, καὶ ὁ ἡπειρώτης, καὶ ὁ Σαλατήτης, καὶ ὁ σοφίς, καὶ ὁ ἀσφύς.

it is no wonder if some men should think every reason reproveable. But in such cases, demonstration is a relative term, and signifies every probation greater or lesser, which does actually make faith in any proposition; and in this, God hath never been deficient, but hath to all men that believe him, given sufficient to confirm them, to those few that believed not, sufficient to reprove them.

Now in all these actions of religion, which are naturally consequent to this belief, there is no scruple, but in the instance of faith, which is presented, to be an infused grace, an immission from God, and that for its object it hath supernatural, that is, principles naturally incredible; and therefore faith is supposed a grace above the greatest strength of reason. <sup>a</sup> But in this I consider, that if we look into all the sermons of Christ, we shall not easily find any doctrine, that in any sense troubles natural philosophy, but only that of the resurrection: (for I do not think those mystical expressions of plain truths, such as are [*being born again; eating the flesh of the Son of Man, being in the Father, and the Father in him*] to be exceptions in this assertion) and although some Gentiles did believe and deliver that article, <sup>b</sup> and particularly Chrysippus, and the Thracians (as Mela and Solinus report of them) yet they could not naturally discourse themselves into it, but had it from the imperfect report, and opinion of some Jews that dwelt among them; and it was certainly a revelation or a proposition sent into the world by God. But then the believing it is so far from being above or against nature, that there is nothing in the world more reasonable, than to believe any thing which God tells us, or which is told by a man sent from God with mighty demonstration of his power and veracity. Naturally our bodies cannot rise, that is, there is no natural agent or natural cause sufficient to produce that effect. But

<sup>a</sup> Apud Lactant. l. 7. c. 23.

<sup>b</sup> L. 2. de Thracib. c. 10.

this is an effect of a divine power, and he hath but a little stock of natural reason, who cannot conclude that the same power, which made us out of nothing, can also restore us to the same condition, as well and easily from dust and ashes certainly, as from mere nothing. And in this, and in all the like cases, faith is a submission of the understanding to the word of God, and is nothing else but a confessing that God is truth, and that he is omnipotent, that is, he can do what he will, and he will when he hath once said it. And we are now as ignorant of the essence and nature of forms, and of that which substantially distinguishes man from man, or an angel from an angel, as we were of the greatest article of our religion before it was revealed; and we shall remain ignorant for ever of many natural things, unless they be revealed; and unless we knew all the secrets of philosophy, the mysteries of nature, and the rules and propositions of all things and all creatures, we are fools, if we say, that what we call an article of faith, I mean, truly such, is against natural reason. It may be indeed as much against our natural reasonings, as those reasonings are against truth. But if we remember how great an ignorance dwells upon us all, it will be found the most reasonable thing in the world only to enquire, whether God hath revealed any such proposition, and then not to say it is against natural reason, and therefore an article of faith; but I am told a truth, which I knew not till now, and so my reason is become instructed into a new proposition. And although Christ hath given us no new moral precepts, but such which were essentially and naturally reasonable in order to the end of man's creation, yet we may easily suppose him to teach us many a new truth, which we knew not, and to explicate to us many particulars of that estate, which God designed for man in his first production, but yet did not then declare to him; and to furnish him with new revelations, and to signify the greatness of the designed end, to become so many arguments

of endearment to secure his duty, that is, indeed, to secure his happiness by the infallible using the instruments of attaining it.

This is all I am to say concerning the precepts of religion Jesus taught us; he took off those many superinduced rites, which God enjoined to the Jews, and reduced us to the natural religion, that is, to such expressions of duty, which all wise men and nations used, save only that he took away the rite of sacrificing beasts, because it was now determined in the great sacrifice, of himself, which sufficiently and eternally reconciled all the world to God. All the other things, as prayers and adoration, and eucharist, and faith in God, are of a natural order and an unalterable expression; and in the nature of the thing there is no other way of address to God than these; no other expression of his glories and our needs; both which must for ever be signified.

2. Concerning the second natural precept, Christian religion hath also added nothing beyond the first obligation, but explained it all. *Whatsoever ye would men should do to you, do ye so to them*, that is the eternal rule of justice; and that binds contracts, keeps promises, affirms truth, makes subjects obedient, and princes just; it gives security to marts and banks, and introduces an equality of condition upon all the world, save only, when an inequality is necessary, that is, in the relations of government, for the preservation of the common rights of equal titles and possessions, that there be some common term endued with power, who is to be the Father of all men by an equal provision; that every man's rights be secured by that fear, which naturally we shall bear to him, who can and will punish all unreasonable and unjust vio-

<sup>a</sup> Just. Mart. Resp. ad Orthodox. ad qu. 83. Tertul. adv. Marcion. 2. 2. Maimon. Monreh. Nevochim. l. 3. c. 32.

<sup>b</sup> Hæc sententia sæpissime à Severo Imperatore prolata. "Ὁ μισθὸς μηδὲν ὀφείλεις. Tob. 4. 16. Dixit Mimusi: "Ab alio expectes alteri quod feceris."

<sup>c</sup> Singulorum interest, si universi regantur.

lations of property. And concerning this also the holy Jesus hath added an express precept, of paying tribute, and all Cæsar's dues to Cæsar: in all other particulars it is necessary, that the instances and minutes of justice be appointed by the laws and customs of the several kingdoms and republicks. ' And therefore it was that Christianity so well combined with the government of heathen princes, because whatsoever was naturally just, or declared so by the political power, their religion bound them to observe, making obedience to be a double duty, a duty both of justice and religion: And the societies of Christians growing up from conventicles to assemblies, from assemblies to societies, introduced no change in the government, but by little and little turned the commonwealth into a church, till the world being Christian, and justice also being religion, obedience to princes, observation of laws, honesty in contracts, faithfulness in promises, gratitude to benefactors, simplicity in discourse, and ingenuity in all pretences and transactions became the characterisms of Christian men, and the word of a Christian the greatest solemnity of stipulation in the world.

But concerning the general, I consider, that in two very great instances it was remonstrated, that Christianity was the greatest prosecution of natural justice and equality in the whole world. The one was in an election of an apostle into the place of Judas, when there were two equal candidates of the same pretension and capacity; the question was determined by lots, which naturally was the arbitration in questions, whose parts were wholly indifferent; and as it was used in all times, so it is to this day used with us in many places, where lest there be a disagreement concerning the manner of tithing some creatures, and to prevent unequal arts and unjust practices, they are ti-

\* *Nec natura potest justo secernere iniquum,  
Dividit ut bona diversis, fugienda petendis.*

*Hor. l. 1. Sat. 3.*



thed by lot, and their fortuitous passing through the door of their fold. The other is in the cœnobitic life of the first Christians and apostles; they had all things in common, which was that state of nature in which men lived charitably and without injustice, before the distinction of dominions and private rights. But from this manner of life they were soon driven by the public necessity and constitution of affairs.

3. Whatsoever else is in the Christian law, concerns the natural precept of sobriety, in which there is some variety and some difficulty. In the matter of carnality the holy Jesus did clearly reduce us to the first institution of marriage in paradise, allowing no other mixture but what was first intended in the creation, and first sacramental union; and in the instance he so permitted us to the natural law, that he was pleased to mention no instance of forbidden lust, but in general and comprehensive terms of adultery and fornication; in the other, which are still more unnatural, as their names are concealed and hidden in shame and secrecy, we are to have no instructor but the modesty and order of nature.

As an instance of this law of sobriety, Christ superadded the whole doctrine of humility, which Moses did not, and which seemed almost to be extinguished in the world; and it is called by St. Paul, *xpere ad sobrietatem*, the reasonableness or wisdom of sobriety. And it is all the reason of the world, that a man should think of himself but just as he is. He is deceived that thinks otherwise, and is a fool; and when we consider that pride makes wars, and causes affronts, and no man loves a proud man, and he loves no man but himself and his flatterers, we shall understand that the precept of humility is an excellent art, and a happy instrument towards human felicity. And it is no way contradicted by a natural desire of honour; it only appoints just and reasonable ways of obtaining it. We are not forbidden to receive honour; but to seek it for designs of pride and complacency, or

to make it rest in our hearts. But when the hand of virtue receives the honour, and transmits it to God from our own head, the desires of nature are sufficiently satisfied, and nothing of religion contradicted. And it is certain, by all the experience of the world, that in every state and order of men, he that is most humble in proportion to that state, is (if all things else be symbolical) the most honoured person. For it is very observable, that when God designed man to a good and happy life, as the natural end of his creation, to verify this, \* God was pleased to give him objects sufficient and apt to satisfy every appetite; I say to satisfy it naturally, not to satisfy those extravagancies, which might be accidental and procured by the irregularity either of will or understanding; not to answer him in all that his desires could extend to, but to satisfy the necessity of every appetite; all the desires that God made, not all that man should make. <sup>b</sup> For we see even in those appetites, which are common to men and beasts, all the needs of nature, and all the ends of creation are served by the taking such proportions of their objects, which are ordinate to their end, and which in man we call temperance, (not as much as they naturally can) such as are mixtures of sexes merely for production of their kind; eating and drinking for needs and hunger; and yet God permitted our appetites to be able to extend beyond the limits of the mere natural design, that God by restraining them, and putting the fetters of laws upon them might turn natural desires into sobriety, and sobriety into religion, they becoming servants of the commandment. And now we must not call all those swellings of appetites, natural inclination, nor the satisfaction of such tumours and excrescencies any part of natural felicities: but that which does just co-ope-

\* *Vina sitim sedant, natis Venus alma credendis  
Serviat: hos fines transilisse nocet.*

*Virg.*

<sup>b</sup> Ὁ μὲν τὰς υπερβολὰς διώκων τῶν ἡδίων, ἢ καὶ ὑπερβολὰς ἢ διὰ προαίρεσιν, ἢ μὴ δι' αὐτὰς.  
\* οὐδ' αὖτε ἢ μὴ δι' ἔργον ὑπερβαίνει, ἀνάγκη. *Arist. Ethic. l. 7. c. 7.*

rate to those ends, which perfect human nature in order to its proper end. For the appetites of meat and drink, and pleasures, are but intermedial and instrumental to the end, and are not made for themselves, but first for the end, and then to serve God in the instances of obedience. And just so is the natural desire of honour, intended to be a spur to virtue (for to virtue only it is naturally consequent, or to natural and political superiority) but to desire it beyond, or besides the limit, is the swelling and the disease of the desire. And we can take no rule for its perfect value, but by the strict limits of the natural end, or the superinduced end of religion in positive restraints.

According to this discourse we may best understand, that even the severest precepts of the Christian law are very consonant to nature, and the first laws of mankind. Such is the precept of self-denial, which is nothing else but a confining the appetites within the limits of nature: for there they are permitted, (except when some greater purpose is to be served than the present answering the particular desire) and whatsoever is beyond it, is not in the natural order to felicity; it is no better than an itch, which must be scratched and satisfied, but it is unnatural. But for martyrdom itself, quitting our goods, losing lands, or any temporal interest, they are now become as reasonable in the present constitution of the world, as taking unpleasant potions, and suffering a member to be cauterized, in sickness or disease. And we see that death is naturally a less evil than a continual torment, and by some not so resented as a great disgrace; and some persons have chosen it for sanctuary and remedy; and therefore much rather shall it be accounted prudent and reasonable and agreeable to the most perfect desires of nature, to exchange a house for a hundred, a friend for a patron, a short affliction for a lasting joy, and a temporal death for an eternal life. For so the question is stated to us by him that understands it best. True it is, that the suffering of losses, afflic-

tions, and death, is naturally an evil, and therefore no part of a natural precept, or prime injunction. But when God having commanded instances of religion, man will not suffer us to obey God, or will not suffer us to live, then the question is, Which is most agreeable to the most perfect and reasonable desires of nature, to obey God, or to obey man; to fear God or to fear man; to preserve our bodies, or to preserve our souls; to secure a few years of uncertain and troublesome duration, or an eternity of a very glorious condition? Some men reasonably enough choose to die for considerations lower than that of a happy eternity; therefore death is not such an evil but that it may in some cases be desired and reasonably chosen, and in some be recompensed at the highest rate of a natural value. And if by accident we happen into an estate, in which of necessity one evil or another must be suffered, certainly nothing is more naturally reasonable and eligible, than to choose the least evil: and when there are two good things propounded to our choice, both which cannot be possessed, nothing is more certainly the object of a prudent choice than the greater good. And therefore when once we understand the question of suffering, and self-denial, and martyrdom to this sense, as all christians do, and all wise men do, and all sects of men do in their several persuasions, it is but remembering that to live happily after this life is more intended to us by God, and is more perfective of human nature, than to live here with all the prosperity which this state affords; and it will eventually follow that when violent men will not let us enter into that condition by the ways of nature and prime intendment, that is, of natural religion, justice, and sobriety, it is made in that case, and upon that supposition, certainly, naturally, and infallibly reasonable to secure the perfective and principal design of our felicity, though it be by such instruments, which are as unpleasant to our senses as are the instruments of our

restitution to health; since one and the other in the present conjunction and state of affairs are most proportionable to reason, because they are so to the present necessity; not primarily intended to us by God, but superinduced by evil accidents, and the violence of men. And we not only find that Socrates suffered death in attestation of a God, though he flattered and discoursed himself into the belief of an immortal reward, *De industriâ consultæ æquanimittatis, non de fiduciâ compertæ veritatis* (as Tertullian says of him), but we also find, that all men that believe the immortality of the soul firmly and unmoveably, made no scruple of exchanging their life for the preservation of virtue with the interest of their great hope, for honour sometimes, and oftentimes for their country.

Thus the holy Jesus perfected and restored the natural law, and drew it into a system of propositions, and made them to become of the family of religion. For God is so zealous to have man attain to the end to which he first designed him, that those things which he hath put in the natural order to attain that end he hath bound fast upon us, not only by the order of things by which it was that he that prevaricated did fall short of felicity; but also by bands of religion; he hath now made himself a party and an enemy to those that will be not happy. Of old religion was but one of the natural laws, and the instances of religion were distinct from the discourses of philosophy. Now all the law of nature is adopted into religion, and by our love and duty to God we are tied to do all that is reason; and the parts of our religion are but pursuances of the natural relation between God and us; and beyond all this, our natural condition is in all senses improved by the consequents and adherencies of this religion: for although nature and grace are opposite, that is, nature depraved by evil habits, by ignorance and ungodly customs, is contrary to grace, that is, to nature restored by the gospel, engaged to regular living by new revelations, and assisted by the Spirit,

yet it is observable that the law of nature and the law of grace are never opposed. <sup>a</sup> *There is a law of our members*, saith St. Paul ; that is, an evil necessity introduced into our appetites by perpetual evil customs, examples, and traditions of vanity, and <sup>b</sup> *there is a law of sin* that answers to this ; and they differ only as inclination, and habit, vitious desires, and vitious practises. But then contrary to these are, first a law of my mind, which is, the law of nature and right reason, and then the law of grace, that is, of Jesus Christ who perfected and restored the first law, and by assistances reduced it into a law of holy living ; and these two differ as the other ; the one is in order to the other ; as imperfection and growing degrees and capacities are to perfection and consummation. The law of the mind had been so rased and obliterate, and we by some means or other so disabled from observing it exactly, that until it was turned into the law of grace (which is a law of pardoning infirmities, and assisting us in our choices and elections) we were in a state of deficiency from the perfective state of man, to which God intended us.

Now although God always designed man to the same state which he hath now revealed by Jesus Christ, yet he told him not of it, and his permissions and licences were then greater, and the law itself lay closer folded up in the compact body of necessary propositions, in order to so much of his end as was known or could be supposed. But now according to the extension of the revelation, the law itself is made wider, that is, more explicit ; and natural reason is thrust forward into discourses of charity and benefit, and we tied to do very much good to others, and tied to co-operate to each others felicity.

That the law of charity is a law of nature, needs no other argument but the consideration of the first constitution of man. The first instances of justice or en-

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 7, 23.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid.

tercourse of man with a second or third person, was to such persons, towards whom he had the greatest endearments of affection in the world, a wife, and children; and justice and charity at first was the same thing.<sup>a</sup> And it had obtained in ages far removed from the first, that charity is called righteousness, *He hath dispersed and given to the poor, his righteousness remaineth for ever.* And it is certain Adam could not in any instance be unjust, but he must in the same also be uncharitable; the band of his first justice being the ties of love, and all having commenced in love. And our blessed Lord, restoring all to the intention of the first perfection, expresses it to the same sense as I formerly observed; justice to our neighbour is loving him as ourselves. For since justice obliges us to do as we would be done to, as the irascible faculty restrains us from doing evil for fear of receiving evil; so the concupiscible obliges us to charity, that ourselves may receive good.

I shall say nothing concerning the reasonableness of this precept, but that it concurs rarely with the first reasonable appetite of man, of being like God. *Deus est: mortali juvare mortalem, atque hæc est ad æternitatem via,* said Pliny. And, *it is more blessed to give than to receive,* said our blessed Saviour; and therefore the commandment of charity in all its parts is a design not only to reconcile the most miserable person to some participations and sense of felicity, but to make the charitable man happy; and whether this be not very agreeable to the desires of an intelligent nature, need no further enquiry. And Aristotle asking the question whether a man had more need of friends in prosperity or adversity, makes the case equal; *Ὅτε γὰρ ἀτυχεῖντες δέονται ἐπικυρίας· οἱ δὲ ἐντυχεῖντες συμβίωσι, ἕως εὐπορίης σωσιν.* “When they are in want, they need assistance, when they are prosperous they need partners of their

<sup>a</sup> Ὁ ἀνθρώπος ἐν ἐγγληκῇ πέφυκε. *M. Anto. l. 9.*

<sup>b</sup> *Psal. 112. 9.*

felicity; that by communicating their joy to them it may reflect and double upon their spirits. And certain it is there is no greater felicity in the world, than in the content that results from the emanations of charity. And this is that which St. John calls *the old commandment and the new commandment*. <sup>b</sup> It was of old, for it was from the beginning, even in nature and to the offices of which our very bodies had an organ and a seat. <sup>c</sup> For therefore nature gave to a man bowels and the passion of yerning; but it grew up into religion by parts, and was made perfect, and in that degree appropriate to the law of Jesus Christ. For so the holy Jesus became our lawgiver, and added many new precepts over and above what were in the law of Moses, but not more than was in the law of nature. The reason of both is what I have all this while discoursed of. Christ made a more perfect restitution of the law of nature than Moses did, and so it became the second Adam to consummate that, which began to be less perfect from the prevarication of the first Adam.

A particular of the precept of charity is forgiving injuries, and besides that it hath many superinduced benefits by way of blessing and revard, it relies also upon this natural reason; that a pure and a simple revenge does no way restore man towards the felicity which the injury did interrupt. For revenge is a doing a simple evil, and does not in its formality imply reparation; for the meer repeating of our own right is permitted to them that will do it by charit-

<sup>a</sup> 1 ep. Joan. 2. 7, 8.

<sup>b</sup> ————— Ἄνδρα δ' ὠφελεῖν,  
Ἄφ' ὧν ἔχουσι τὴν δύναμιτο κάλλιστος πόλεων.

*Sophocl. Oedip.*

<sup>c</sup> ————— Hoc Reges habent  
Magnificum & ingens, nulla quod rapiat dies,  
Prodesse miseris, supplices fido lare.  
Protegere ————— *Sencc. Med.*

————— Mollissima corda  
Humano generi dare se natura fatetur,  
Quæ lacrymas dedit; hæc nostri pars optima sensus.

*Juven. Sat. 15.*



able instruments; and to secure myself, or the public against the future, by positive inflictions upon the injurious (if I be not judge myself), is also within the moderation of an unblamable defence, (unless some accident or circumstances vary the case), but forgiving injuries is a separating the malice from the wrong, the transient act from the permanent effect; and it is certain, the act which is passed cannot be rescinded, the effect may; and if it cannot, it does no way alleviate the evil of the accident, that I draw him that caused it into as great a misery, since every evil happening in the world is the proper object of pity, which is in some sense afflictive; and therefore unless we become unnatural and without bowels, it is most unreasonable that we should encrease our own afflictions by introducing a new misery, and making a new object of pity. All the ends of human felicity are secured without revenge, for without it we are permitted to restore ourselves; and therefore it is against natural reason to do an evil, that no way co-operates towards the proper and perfective end of human nature. And he is a miserable person whose good is the evil of his neighbour; \*and he that revenges in many cases does worse than he that did the injury, in all cases as bad. For if the first injury was an injustice to serve an end of advantage and real benefit, then my revenge, which is abstracted, and of a consideration separate and distinct from the reparation, is worse; for I do him evil without doing myself any real good, which he did not; for he received advantage by it.

\* Ὁ τιμωρὼν τῷ περὶ πάρεξιν ἀδικώτερος. Maxim. Tyrius in dissert. An referenda sit injuria.

Ἄπαντα τὰ ζῶ' εἰς μακαριώτατα,  
καὶ πῦν ἔχοντα μαλλὼν ἀνδράπων πολὺ·  
τὸν οὖν ἰδὼν ἔξεσι πρῶτον τῆτονι,  
τῷ τῳ κακὸν δὲ αὐτὸν ἔδεν γίνεσθαι·  
Ἡμεῖς δὲ χωρὶς τῶν ἀναγκαίων κακῶν,  
αὐτοὶ παρ' αὐτῶν ἕτερα προσπορίζομεν.  
Ἀνυπόμειθ' ἂν πλῆρη τις ἂν εἴπῃ κακῶς,  
Ὅσον ἔοικεθ' ἂν ἰδῇ τις ἐνύπνιον, σφύδρα  
φουδόμεθ' ἂν γλαυξ ἀναγκάγη, δεδοικαμεν.

Menand.

## THE PREFACE.

But if the first injury was matter of meer malice without advantage, yet it is no worse than revenge, for that is just so; and there is as much phantastic pleasure in doing a spight, as in doing revenge. They are both but like the pleasures of eating coals, and toads, and vipers. And certain it is, if a man upon his private stock could be permitted to revenge, the evil would be immortal. And it is rarely well discoursed by Tyndarus in Euripides, If the angry wife shall kill her husband, the son shall revenge his father's death, and kill his mother, and then the brother shall kill his mother's murderer, and he also will meet an avenger for killing his brother:

\* Πέρης δὲ τοῖ κακῶν προβήσεται;

What end shall there be to such inhuman and sad accidents? If in this there be injustice, it is against natural reason; and if it be evil, and disorders the felicity and security of society, it is also against natural reason. But if it be just it is a strange justice, that is made up of so many inhumanities.

And now if any man pretends specially to reason, to the ordinate desires and perfections of nature, and the sober discourses of philosophy, here is in christianity, and no where else, enough to satisfy and inform his reason, to perfect his nature, and to reduce to act all the propositions of an intelligent and wise spirit. And the Holy Ghost is promised and given in our religion to be an eternal band to keep our reason from returning to the darkness of the old creation, and to promote the ends of our natural and proper felicity. For it is not a vain thing that St. Paul reckons helps, and governments, and healings to be fruits of the spirit. For since the two greatest blessings of the world, personal and political, consist, that in health, this in go-

† Eurip. Orest.

vernment,\* and the ends of human felicity are served in nothing greater for the present interval than in these two, Christ did not only enjoin rare prescriptions of health, such as are fasting, temperance, chastity, and sobriety, and all the greater endearments of government, (and unless they be sacredly observed, man is infinitely miserable), but also hath given his spirit, that is, extraordinary aids to the promoting these two, and facilitating the work of nature; that (as St. Paul says at the end of a discourse to this very purpose)<sup>b</sup> *the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

I shall add nothing but this single consideration. God said to the children of Israel, *Ye are a royal priesthood, a kingdom of priests.* Which was therefore true, because God reigned by the priests, and the *priests' lips did then preserve knowledge*, and the people were to receive the law from their mouths; for God having by laws of his own, established religion and the republic, did govern by the rule of the law, and the ministry of the priests. The priests said, *Thus saith the Lord*, and the people obeyed. And these very words are spoken to the christian church; *Ye are a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praise of him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* That is, God reigns over all christendom, just as he he did over the Jews. He hath now so given to them, and restored respectively all those reasonable laws, which are in order to all good ends personal, æconomical, and political, that if men will suffer christian religion to do its last intention, if men will live according to it, there needs no other coercion of laws, or power of the sword. The laws of God revealed by Christ are sufficient to make all societies of men happy; and over all good men God reigns by his minis-

\* Nihil est illi principi Deo qui omnem hunc mundum regit (quod quidem in terris fiat) acceptius, quàm concilia, cætusque hominum jure sociali, quæ civitates appellantur.

Cicer. somn. Scipion.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. 4. 7.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Pet. 2. 9.

ters, by the preaching of the word: and this was most evident in the three first ages of the church, in which all christian societies were for all their proper intercourses perfectly guided, not by the authority and compulsion, but by the sermons of their spiritual guides; insomuch that St. Paul sharply reprehends the Corinthians, that *Brother goes to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers*; as if he said, ye will not suffer Christ to be your judge, and his law to be your rule; which indeed was a great fault among them, not only because they had so excellent a law, so clearly described, (or where they might doubt they had infallible interpreters) so reasonable and profitable, so evidently concurring to their mutual felicity, but also because God did design Jesus to be their king to reign over them by spiritual regiment, as himself did over the Jews, till they chose a king. And when the Emperors became christian, the case was no otherwise altered, but that the Princes themselves submitting to Christ's yoke, were (as all other christians are) for their proportion to be governed by the royal priesthood, that is, by the word preached by apostolical persons, the political interest remaining as before, save that by being submitted to the laws of Christ it received this advantage, that all justice was turned to be religion, and became necessary, and bound upon the conscience by divinity. And when it happens that a kingdom is converted to christianity, the commonwealth is made a church, and gentile priests are christian bishops, and the subjects of the kingdom are servants of Christ, the religion of the nation is turned christian, and the law of the nation made a part of the religion; there is no change of government, but that Christ is made king, and the temporal power is his substitute, and is to promote the interest of obedience to him, as before he did to Christ's enemy; Christ having left his ministers as lieger ambassadors to signify and publish the laws of Jesus, to *pray all in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God*; so that, over

the obedient, Christ wholly reigns by his ministers, publishing his laws; over the disobedient by the prince also putting those laws in execution. And in this sense it is that St. Paul says, *Bonis lex non est posita*, To such (who live after the spirit), there is no law; that is, there needs no coercion. But now if we reject God from reigning over us, and say, like the people in the gospel, *Nolumus hunc regnare*, we will not have him to reign over us, by the ministry of his word, by the empire of the royal priesthood, then we return to the condition of heathens, and persons sitting in darkness; then God hath armed the temporal power with a sword to cut us off. If we obey not God, speaking by his ministers, that is, if we live not according to the excellent laws of christianity, that is, holily, soberly, and justly in all our relations, he hath placed three swords against us: the sword of the spirit against the unholy and irreligious; the sword of natural and supervening infelicities upon the intemperate and unsober; and the sword of kings against the unjust; to demonstrate the excellency of christianity, and how certainly it leads to all the felicity of man, because every transgression of this law, according to its proportion, makes men unhappy and unfortunate.

What effect this discourse may have I know not, I intended it to do honour to christianity, and to represent it to be the best religion in the world, and the conjugation of all excellent things that were in any religion, or in any philosophy, or in any discourses.\* For *whatsoever was honest, whatsoever was noble, whatsoever was wise, whatsoever was of good report, if there be any praise, if there be any virtue*, it is in christianity. For even to follow all these instances of excellency, is a precept of christianity. And me thinks they that pretend to reason, cannot more reasonably endear themselves to the reputation of reason, than by en-

dearing their reason to christianity; the conclusions and belief of which is the most reasonable and perfect, the most excellent design and complying with the noblest and most proper ends of man. And if this gate may suffice to invite such persons into the recesses of the religion, then I shall tell them, that I have dressed it in the ensuing books with some variety; and as the nature of the religion is, some parts whereof are apt to satisfy our discourse, some to move our affections, and yet all of this to relate to practise, so is the design of the following pages. For some men are wholly made up of passion, and their very religion is but passion put into the family and society of holy purposes: and for those I have prepared considerations upon the special parts of the life of the holy Jesus, and yet there are also some things mingled in the least severe and most affectionate parts, which may help to answer a question and appease a scruple, and may give rule for determination of many cases of conscience. For I have so ordered the considerations that they spend not themselves in mere affections, and ineffective passions, but they are made doctrinal and little repositories of duty. But because of the variety of men's spirits, and of men's necessities, it was necessary I should interpose some practical discourses more severe; for it is but a sad thought to consider that piety and books of devotion are counted but entertainment for little understandings and softer spirits; and although there is much fault in such imperious minds, that they will not distinguish the weakness of the writers from the reasonableness and wisdom of the religion; yet I cannot but think the books themselves are in a large degree the occasion of so great indevotion: because they are, some few excepted, represented naked in the conclusions of spiritual life without art or learning, and made apt for persons who can do nothing but believe and love, not for them that can consider and love. And it is not well that since nothing is more reasonable and

excellent in all perfections spiritual than the doctrines of the spirit or holy life, yet nothing is offered to us so unlearnedly as this is, so miserable and empty of all its own intellectual perfections. If I could I would have had it otherwise in the present books; for since the understanding is not an idle faculty in a spiritual life, but hugely operative to all excellent and reasonable choices, it were very fit that this faculty were also entertained by such discourses which God intended, as instruments of hallowing it, as he intended it towards the sanctification of the whole man. For want of it, busy and active men entertain themselves with notions infinitely unsatisfying and unprofitable: but in the mean time they are not so wise. For concerning those that study unprofitable notions, and neglect not only that which is wisest, but that also, which is of most real advantage, I cannot but think as Aristotle<sup>a</sup> did of Thales and Anaxagoras, that “they may be learned, but they are not wise, or wise but not prudent, when they are ignorant of such things, as are profitable to them. For suppose they know the wonders of nature, and the subtilties of metaphysics, and operations mathematical, yet they cannot be prudent who spend themselves wholly upon unprofitable and ineffective contemplations.” He is truly wise that knows best to promote the best end, that which he is bound to desire, and is happy if he obtains, and miserable if he misses; and that is the end of a happy eternity, which is obtained by the only means of living according to the purposes of God, and the prime intentions of nature; natural and prime reason being now all one with the christian religion. But then I shall only observe that this part of wisdom, and the excellency of its secret and deep reason is not to be discerned, but by experi-

<sup>a</sup> Διὸ Αναξαγόραν ἢ Θέτην ἢ τὸς τοιούτους σοφῶς μὲν, φρονίμως δὲ ἃ φασιν εἶπαι, ὅταν ἴδωσιν ἀγνοῦντας τὰ συμφέροντα αὐτοῖς, ἢ περὶ τὰ μὲν, καὶ θαυμάσια, καὶ χαλεπὰ καὶ δαιμόνια εἰδέναι αὐτὸς φασιν, ἀχρηστὰ δὲ ὅτι ἃ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ἀγαθὰ ζητοῦσιν. *Arist.* 4. 6. *Eth.* cap. 7.

ence: the propositions of this philosophy being (as in many other) empirical, and best found out by observation of real and material events. So that I may say of spiritual learning, as Quintilian said of some of Plato's books, *Nam Plato cum in aliis quibusdam, tum præcipuè in Timæo ne intelligi quidem, nisi ab iis qui hanc quoque partem disciplinæ [Musicæ] diligenter perceperint, potest*, The secrets of the kingdom of heaven are not understood truly and thoroughly but by the sons of the kingdom; and by them too in several degrees, and to various purposes; but to evil persons the whole system of this wisdom is insipid and flat, dull as the foot of a rock, and unlearned as the elements of our mother tongue. But so are mathematics to a Scythian boor and music to a camel.

But I consider that the wisest persons, and those who know how to value and entertain the more noble faculties of their soul, and their precious hours, take more pleasure in reading the productions of those old wise spirits who preserved natural reason and religion in the midst of heathen darkness; such as are Homer, Euripides, Orpheus, Pindar, and Anacreon, Eschylus and Menander, and all the Greek poets; Plutarch and Polybius, Xenophon, and all those other excellent persons of both faculties (whose choicest dictates are collected by Stobæus), Plato and his scholars, Aristotle, and after him Porphyry, and all his other disciples; Pythagoras and his, especially Hierocles: all the old academics and stoics within the Roman schools; more pleasure I say in reading these than the triflings of many of the later schoolmen, who promoted a petty interest of a family, or an unlearned opinion with great earnestness, but added nothing to Christianity but trouble, scruple, and vexation. And from hence I hope that they may the rather be invited to love and consider the rare documents of Christianity, which certainly is the great treasure house of those excellent, moral, and perfective discourses, which with much pains and greater pleasure we find re-



scattered and thinly scattered in all the Greek and Roman poets, historians, and philosophers.

But because I have observed, that there are some principles entertained into the persuasions of men, which are the seeds of evil life, such as are, *the doctrine of late repentance; the mistakes of the definition of the sins of infirmity? the evil understanding, the consequents and nature of original sin; the sufficiency of contrition in order to pardon; the efficacy of the rites of christianity without the necessity of moral adherencies; the nature of faith, and many other; I was diligent to remark such doctrines, and to pare off the mistakes so far that they hinder not piety, and yet as near as I could without engaging in any question, in which the very life of christianity is not concerned.*

*\* Hæc sum profatus—haud ambagibus  
Implicita, sed quæ regulis æqui & boni  
Suffulta, rudibus pariter & doctis patent.*

My great purpose is to advance the necessity, and to declare the manner and parts of a good life,<sup>b</sup> and to invite some persons to the consideration of all the parts of it by intermixing something of pleasure with the use: others by such parts, which will better entertain their spirits than a romance. I have followed the design of scripture, and have given milk for babes, and for stronger men stronger meat; and in all I have despised my own reputation by so striving to make it useful, that I was less careful to make it strict in retired senses, and embossed with unnecessary but graceful ornaments. I pray God this may go forth into a blessing to all that shall use it, and reflect blessings upon me all the way, that my spark may grow greater by kindling my brother's taper, and God may

\* Polynic. apud Eurip.

<sup>b</sup> Ἡ παρῶσα πραγματεία ἔνεκά ἐστιν, ὥσπερ αἱ ἄλλαι· ὃ γὰρ ἵν' εὐδαιμονίᾳ τί ἐστιν ἀρετῇ, σκοπεύμεθα· ἄλλ' ἵν' ἀγαθοὶ γινώμεθα. Arist. Ethic. l. 2. c. 2.

be glorified in us both. If the reader shall receive no benefit, yet I intended him one, and I have laboured in order to it; and I shall receive a great recompence for that intention, if he shall please to say this prayer for me, *That while I have preached to others I may not become a castaway.*

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THE  
**HISTORY**  
OF  
THE LIFE AND DEATH  
OF THE  
**HOLY JESUS.**

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PART I.

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Beginning at the ANNUNCIATION to the Blessed Virgin MARY,  
until his Baptism and Temptations inclusively.



AN  
EXHORTATION  
TO THE  
IMITATION  
OF  
THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

---

**H**OWEVER the person of Jesus Christ was depressed with a load of humble accidents, and shadowed with the darkneses of poverty and sad contingencies, so that the Jews, and the contemporary ages of the Gentiles, and the apostles themselves could not at first discern the brightest essence of divinity: yet as a beauty artificially covered with a thin cloud of cypress, transmits its excellency to the eye made more greedy and apprehensive by that imperfect and weak restraint: so was the sanctity and holiness of the life of Jesus, glorious in its darkneses, and found confessors and admirers even in the midst of those despites which were done him upon the contrariant designs of malice, and contradictory ambition. Thus the wife of Pilate called him *that just person*; Pilate pronounced him guiltless; Judas said, he was innocent; the Devil himself called him, *the Holy One of God*. For however it might concern any man's mistaken ends to dislike the purpose of his preaching, and spiritual kingdom, and those doctrines which were destructive of their complacencies, and carnal securities; yet they could not deny but he was a man of God, of exemplar sanctity, of an angelical chastity, of a life sweet, affable, and complying with humane conversation, and as obedient to government as the most humble children of the kingdom. And yet he was the Lord of all the world.

And certainly very much of this was with a design, that he might shine to all the generations and ages of the world, and become a guiding star, and a *pillar of fire* to us in our journey. For we who believe that Jesus was perfect God, and perfect man, do also believe that one minute of his intolerable passion, and every action of his, might have been satisfactory, and enough for the expiation and reconciliation of ten thousand worlds: and God might upon a less effusion of blood, and a shorter life of merit (if he had pleased) have accepted human nature to pardon and favour: but that the holy Jesus hath added so many excellent instances of holiness, and so many degrees of passion, and so many kinds of virtues, is, that he might become an example to us, and reconcile our wills to him, as well as our persons to his heavenly Father.

And indeed it will prove but a sad consideration, that one drop of blood might be enough to obtain our pardon, and the treasures of his blood running out till the fountain itself was dry, shall not be enough to procure our conformity to him: that the smallest minute of his expence shall be enough to justify us, and the whole magazine shall not procure our sanctification: that at a smaller expence God might pardon us, and at a greater we will not imitate him: for therefore *Christ hath suffered for us* (saith the Apostle), *leaving an example to us, that we might follow his steps*. The least of our wills cost Christ as much as the greatest of our sins. And therefore he calls himself *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*: that as he redeems our souls from death to life, by becoming life to our persons, so he is *the Truth* to our understandings, and *the Way* to our will and affections, enlightening that, and leading these in the paths of a happy eternity.

When the king of Moab was pressed hard by the sons of Isaac, (the Israelites and Edomites), <sup>b</sup> he took the king of Edom's eldest son; or, as some think, his own son, the heir of his kingdom, and offered him as

<sup>a</sup> 1 Pet. 2, 21.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings, 3. 27.



a holocaust upon the wall, and the Edomites presently raised the siege of Kirharaseth, and went to their own country. The same, and much more was God's design, who took not his enemies, but his own son, his only begotten son, and *God himself*, and offered him up in sacrifice, to make us leave our perpetual fightings against heaven; and if we still persist, we are hardened beyond the wildnesses of the Arabs and Edomites, and neither are receptive of the impressions of pity or humanity: who neither have compassion to the suffering of Jesus, nor compliance with the designs of God, nor conformity to the holiness and obedience of our guide. In a dark night, if an *ignis fatuus* do but precede us, the glaring of its lesser flame does so amuse our eyes that we follow it into rivers and precipices, as if the ray of that false light were designed on purpose to be our path to tread in: and therefore not to follow the glories of the sun of righteousness, who, indeed, leads us over rocks and difficult places, but secures us against the danger, and guides us into safety, is the greatest both undecency and unthankfulness in the world.

In the great council of eternity, when God set down the laws, and knit fast the eternal bands of predestination, he made it one of his great purposes to make his Son like us, that we also might be like his holy Son; <sup>a</sup> he, by taking our nature; we, by imitating his holiness: <sup>b</sup> *God hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son* (saith the apostle.) For the <sup>c</sup> first in every kind is in nature propounded as the pattern of the rest; and as the sun, the prince of all the bodies of light, and the fire of all warm substances is the principle, the rule and the copy, which they in their proportions imitate and transcribe: so is the *word incarnate*, the great example of all the predestinate; for <sup>c</sup> *he is the first-born among many brethren*. And therefore it was a precept of the apostle, and by

<sup>a</sup> Διὰ θεομimωσίας εἰς θεοmίαν ἀξιώμενος. S. Dionys.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. 8. 29.

<sup>c</sup> Ibid.

his doctrine we understand its meaning; <sup>a</sup> *Put you on the Lord Jesus Christ*. The similitude declares the duty; as a garment is composed and made of the same fashion with the body, and is applied to each part in its true figure and commensuration: <sup>b</sup> so should we *put on Christ*, and imitate the whole body of his sanctity, conforming to every integral part, and express him in our lives, that God seeing our impresses, may know whose image and superscription we bear, and we may be acknowledged for sons, when we have the air and features, and resemblances of our elder brother.

In the practice of this duty we may be helped by certain considerations which are like the proportion of so many rewards. For this, according to the nature of all holy exercises, stays not for pay till its work be quite finished, but like musick in churches, is pleasure, and piety, and salary besides. So is every work of grace, full of pleasure in the execution, and is abundantly rewarded, besides the stipend of a glorious eternity.

1. I consider that nothing is <sup>c</sup> *more honourable, than to be like God*; and the heathens, worshippers of false deities, grew vicious upon that <sup>d</sup> stock; and we who have fondnesses of imitation, counting a deformity full of honour, if by it we may be like our <sup>e</sup> Prince, (for pleasures were in their height in Capreæ, because Tiberius there wallowed in them, <sup>f</sup> and a tvery-neck in Nero's court was the mode and gallantry) might do well to make our imitations prudent and glorious; and by propounding excellent examples, heighten our fa-

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 13. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Ἡ δὲ σύμφωνος τῷ νομῷ τιμὴ, ἥ τις ὁσίας ἐπὶ τῶν τιμωμένων γῶσιν, ἢ ἡ πρὸς αὐτὴν κατὰ δύναμιν ἰσομοίωσις. ὃ γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ τις, ἢ μιμεῖται ὅσον οἶόντι, ὡς γὰρ φασὶν οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι, Τιμῆς τις τὸν θεὸν ἄριστα, ἐὰν τῷ θεῷ τὴν διανοίαν ὁμοιάσῃ. Hierocl.

<sup>c</sup> Eccclus. 2. 21.

<sup>d</sup> Adulterio delectatur quis? Jovem respicit, et inde cupiditatis sæ fomenta conquirat: probat, imitatur, et laudat; quod Deus suus in cygno fallit, in tauro rapit, luditi in Satyro: Cœnum de cœlo facitis, et errantes animos per abrupta præcipitia crudeli calamitate ducitis, cum hominibus peccare volentibus facinorum viam Deorum monstratis exemplis. Julius Firmic. de error prof. relig.

<sup>e</sup> Facere rectè cives suos princeps optimus faciendo docet: cumq. sit imperio magnus, exemplo magis est. Vellei. Paterc.

<sup>f</sup> ————— νυδεται δὲ μοι

Φαίει τί πάσχει, παρδίνος βία γαμῶν

Προδίδας παῖδας τεκνυμένους λάδρα

Θύσκειντας. ἀμίλει μὴ σὺ γ' ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ κρατεῖς ἀρπίας δίκαιε. Eurip. Ion.

culties to the capacities of an evenness with the best of presidents. He that strives to imitate another, admires him, and confesses his own imperfections: and therefore that our admirations be not flattering, nor our confessions phantastick and impertinent, it were but reasonable to admire Him from whom really all perfections do derive, and before whose glories all our imperfections must confess their shame, and needs of reformation. God by a voice from heaven, and by sixteen generations of miracles and grace, hath attested the holy Jesus to be the fountain of sanctity, and *the wonderful counsellor*, and *the captain of our sufferings*, and the guide of our manners, by being his beloved Son, in whom he took pleasure and complacency to the height of satisfaction: and if any thing in the world be motive of our affections, or satisfactory to our understandings, what is there in heaven or earth we can desire or imagine beyond a likeness to God, and participation of the divine nature and perfections? And therefore as when the sun arises, every man goes to his work, and warms himself with his heat, and is refreshed with his influences, and measures his labour by its course: so should we frame all the actions of our life by his light who hath shined by an excellent righteousness, that we no more walk in darkness, or sleep in lethargies, or run on gazing after the lesser and imperfect beauties of the night. It is weakness of the organ that makes us hold our hand between the sun and us, and yet stand staring upon a meteor or an inflamed gelly. And our judgements are as mistaken, and our appetites are as sottish, if we propound to ourselves in the courses and designs of perfections any copy but of him, or something like him, who is the most perfect. And lest we think his glories too great to behold,

2. I consider that the imitation of the life of Jesus is a duty of that excellency and perfection, that we are helped in it, not only by the assistance of a good and a great example, which possibly might be too great, and scare our endeavours and attempts, but also

by its easiness, compliānce and propōrtion to us. \* For Jesus in his whole life conversed with men with a modest virtue, which like a well kindled fire fitted with just materials casts a constant heat; not like an inflamed heap of stubble, glaring with great emissions, and suddenly stooping into the thickness of smoak: His piety was even, constant, unblameable, complying with civil society, without affrightment of precedent, or prodigious instances of actions, greater than the imitation of men. For if we observe our blessed Saviour in the whole story of his life, although he was without sin, yet the instances of his piety were the actions of a very holy, but of an ordinary life: and we may observe this difference in the story of Jesus from ecclesiastical writings of certain beatified persons, whose life is told rather to amaze us and to create scruples, than to lead us in the evenness and serenity of a holy conscience. Such are the prodigious penances of Simeon Stylites; the abstinence of the religious retired into the mountain Nitria, but especially the stories of later saints in the midst of a declining piety, and aged Christendom, where persons are represented holy by way of idea and fancy, if not to promote the interests of a family and institution. But our blessed Saviour though his eternal union and adherences of love and obedience to his heavenly Father were next to infinite, yet in his external actions, in which only, with the correspondence of the Spirit in those actions, he propounds himself imitable, he did so converse with men, that men after that example might for ever converse with him. We find that some saints have had excrescencies and eruptions of holiness in the instances of uncommanded duties, which in the same particulars we find not in the story of the life of Jesus. John Baptist was a greater mortifier than his Lord was; and some princes have given more money than all Christ's family did, whilst he was alive: but the difference which is ob-

\* Admonetur omnis ætas fieri posse, quod aliquando factum est. Exempla fiunt, quæ jam esse facinora destiterunt. *S. Cyprian.*

servable is, that although some men did some acts of counsel in order to attain that perfection which in Jesus was essential and unalterable, and was not acquired by degrees, and means of danger and difficulty; yet no man ever did his whole duty, save only the holy Jesus. The best of men did sometimes actions not precisely and strictly requisite, and such as were besides the precept; but yet in the greatest flames of their shining piety, they prevaricated something of the commandment: they that have done the most things beyond, have also done some things short of their duty. But Jesus, who intended himself the example of piety, did in manners as in the rule of faith; which, because it was propounded to all men, was fitted to every understanding; it was true, necessary, short, easy, and intelligible. So was his rule and his copy fitted not only with excellencies worthy, but with compliances possible to be imitated; of glories, so great that the most early and constant industry must confess its own imperfections, and yet so sweet and humane, that the greatest infirmity, if pious, shall find comfort and encouragement. Thus God gave his children manna from heaven, and though it was excellent like the food of angels, yet it conformed to every palate according to that appetite which their several fancies and constitutions did produce.

But now when the example of Jesus is so excellent that it allures and tempts with its facility and sweetness, and that we are not commanded to imitate a life, whose story tells of extasies in prayer, and abstractions of senses, and immaterial transportations, and fastings to the exinanition of spirits and disabling all animal operations: but a life of justice and temperance, of chastity and piety, of charity and devotion, such a life, without which human society cannot be conserved, and by which our irregularities are made regular, so our weaknesses are not upbraided, nor our

\* Ως εὐχόμενοι τοῖς θεοῖς, μετεωρίζη μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς πλέον ἢ δεκα πῆχεις εἰκάζεσθαι,  
dixit Eupapius de Iamblicho.

miseries made a mockery; we find so much reason to address ourselves to a heavenly imitation of so blessed a pattern, that the reasonableness of the thing will be a great argument to chide every degree and minute of neglect. It was a strange and a confident encouragement which Phocion used to a timorous Greek who was condemned to die with him; *Is it not enough to thee that thou mayst die with Phocion?* I am sure he that is most incurious of the issues of his life is yet willing enough to reign with Jesus, when he looks upon the glories represented without the duty: but it is a very great stupidity and unreasonableness not to live with him in the imitation of so holy and so prompt a piety. It is glorious to do what he did, and a shame to decline his sufferings, when there was a God to hallow and sanctify the actions, and a man clothed with infirmity to undergo the sharpness of the passion: so that the glory of the person added excellency to the first, and the tenderness of the person excused not from suffering the latter.

3. Every action of the life of Jesus, as it is imitable by us, is of so excellent merit, that by making up the treasure of grace, it becomes full of assistances to us, and obtains of God grace to enable us to its imitation by way of influence and impetration. For as in the acquisition of habits the very exercise of the action does produce a facility to the action, and in some proportion becomes the cause of itself; so does every exercise of the life of Christ kindle its own fires, inspires breath into itself, and makes an univocal production of itself in a differing subject: and Jesus becomes the fountain of spiritual life to us, as the prophet Elisha to the dead child: when he stretched his hands upon the child's hands, laid his mouth to his mouth, and formed his posture to the boy, and breathed into him; the spirit returned again into the child at the prayer of Elisha: so when our lives are formed into the imitation of the life of the holiest Jesus, the spirit of God returns into us, not only by the efficacy

of the imitation, but by the merit and impetration of the actions of Jesus. It is reported in the Bohemian story, <sup>a</sup> that S. Wincellaus their King one winter night going to his devotions in a remote church barefooted in the snow, and sharpness of unequal and pointed ice, his servant Podavivus, who waited upon his master's piety and endeavoured to imitate his affections, began to faint through the violence of the snow and cold, till the King commanded him to follow him, and set his feet in the same footsteps which his feet should mark for him: the servant did so, and either fancied a cure, or found one: for he followed his prince, helped forward with shame and zeal to his imitation, and by the forming footsteps for him in the snow. In the same manner does the blessed Jesus: for since our way is troublesome, obscure, full of objection and danger, apt to be mistaken and to affright our industry; he commands us to mark his footsteps, to tread where his feet have stood, and not only invites us forward by the argument of his example, but he hath trodden down much of the difficulty, and made the way easier and fit for our feet. For he knows our infirmities, and himself hath felt their experience in all things but in the neighbourhoods of sin; and therefore he hath proportioned a way and a path to our strengths and capacities, and like Jacob hath marched softly and in evenness with the children and the cattle to entertain us by the comforts of his company, and the influences of a perpetual guide.

4. But we must know that not every thing which Christ did, is imitable by us, neither did he in the work of our redemption in all things imitate his heavenly Father. For there are some things which are issues of an absolute power, some are expresses of supreme dominion, some are actions of a judge. And therefore Jesus prayed for his enemies, and wept over Jerusalem, when at the same instant his Eternal Father laughed them to scorn: for he knew that *their day*

<sup>a</sup> Histor. Bohem. l. 4.

*was coming*, and himself had decreed their ruin. But it became the holy Jesus to imitate his Father's mercies; for himself was the great instrument of the eternal compassion, and was the instance of mercy; and therefore in the operation of his Father's design, every action of his was univocal, and he shewed the power of his divinity in nothing but in miracles of mercy, and illustrations of faith, by creating arguments of credibility. In the same proportion we follow Jesus, as himself followed his Father: for what he abated by the order to his intendment and design, we abate by the proportions of our nature: for some excellent acts of his were demonstrations of divinity, and an excellent grace pour'd forth upon him *without measure* was their instrument: to which proportions if we should extend our infirmities, we should crack our sinews, and dissolve the silver cords before we could entertain the instances and support the burthen. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights; but the manner of our fastings have been in all ages limited to the term of an artificial day: and in the primitive observations, and the Jewish rites, men did eat their meal as soon as the stars shone in the firmament. We never read that Jesus laughed, and but once that he rejoiced in spirit: but the declensions of our natures cannot bear the weight of a perpetual grave deportment, without the intervals of refreshment and free alacrity. Our ever blessed Saviour suffered the devotion of Mary Magdalene to transport her to an expensive expression of her religion, and twice to anoint his feet with costly nard: and yet if persons whose conditions were of no greater lustre or resplendency of fortune, than was conspicuous in his family and retinue, should suffer the same profusion upon the dressing and perfuming their bodies, possibly it might be truly said, *It might be sold and distributed to the poor*. This Jesus received as he was the Christ and anointed of the Lord, and by this, he suffered himself to be designed to burial, and he received the oblation as eucharistical for the



ejection of seven devils: *for therefore she loved much.*

The instances are not many. For however Jesus had some extraordinary transvolutions and acts of emigration beyond the lines of his even and ordinary conversation, yet it was but seldom: for his being exemplary was of so great consideration, that he chose to have fewer instances of wonder, that he might transmit the more of an imitable virtue. And therefore we may establish this for a rule and limit of our imitations: because Christ our law-giver hath described all his Father's will in sanctions and signature of laws; whatsoever he commanded, and whatsoever he did of precise morality, or in pursuance of the laws of nature, in that we are to trace his footsteps: and in these his laws and his practice differ but as a map and a guide, a law and a judge, a rule and a precedent. But in the special instances of action, we are to abate the circumstances, and to separate the obedience from the effect: whatsoever was moral in a ceremonial performance, that is highly imitable; and the obedience of sacrificing, and the subordination to laws actually in being, even now they are abrogated, teach us our duty, in a differing subject upon the like reason. Jesus going up to Jerusalem to the feasts, and his observation of the sabbaths, teach us our duty in celebration of festivals constitute by a competent and just authority. For that which gave excellency to the observation of Mosaical rites, was an evangelical duty; and the piety of obedience did not only consecrate the observations of Levi, but taught us our duty in the constitutions of Christianity.

5. As the holy Jesus did some things which we are not to imitate: so we also are to do some things which we cannot learn from his example. For there are some of our duties which presuppose a state of sin; and some suppose a violent temptation and promptness to it, and the duties of prevention, and the instruments of restitution are proper to us, but conveyed only by precept and not by president: such are all

the parts and actions of repentance, the duties of mortification and self-denial. For whatsoever the holy Jesus did in the matter of austerity, looked directly upon the work of our redemption, and looked back only on us by a reflex act, as Christ did on Peter when he looked him into repentance. Some states of life also there are which Jesus never led; such are those of temporal governors, kings and judges, merchants, lawyers, and the state of marriage: in the course of which lives many cases do occur, which need a president, and the vivacity of an excellent example, especially since all the rules which they have, have not prevented the subtilty of the many inventions which men have found out, nor made provision for all  
 ✕ contingencies. Such persons in all their special needs, are to govern their actions by the rules of proportion, by analogy to the holiness of the person of Jesus, and the sanctity of his institution: considering what might become a person professing the discipline of so holy a master, and what he would have done in the like case, taking our heights by the excellency of his innocency  
 ✕ and charity. Only remember this, that in such cases we must always judge on the strictest side of piety and charity, if it be a matter concerning the interest of a second person; and that in all things, we do those actions which are furthest removed from scandal, and such as towards ourselves are severe, towards others full of gentleness and sweetness. For so would the righteous and merciful Jesus have done; these are the best analogies and proportions. And in such cases when the wells are dry, let us take water from a cistern, and propound to ourselves some exemplar saint, the necessities of whose life hath determined his piety to the like occurrences.

But now from these particulars we shall best account, to what the duty of the imitation of Jesus does amount: for it signifies, that we *should walk as he walked*, tread in his steps, with our hand upon the guide, and our eye upon his rule; that we should do glory to him as he did to his Father; and that whatsoever we do, we should be careful that it do him ho-

nour, and no reproach to his institution; and then account these to be the integral parts of our duty, which are imitation of his actions or his spirit, of his rule, or of his life, there being no better imitation of him, than in such actions as do him pleasure, however he hath expressed or intimated the precedent.

He that gives alms to the poor, takes Jesus by the hand; he that patiently endures injuries and affronts, helps him to bear his cross; he that comforts his brother in affliction, gives an amiable kiss of peace to Jesus; he that bathes his own and his neighbour's sins in tears of penance and compassion, washes his Master's feet: we lead Jesus into the recesses of our heart by holy meditations; and we enter into his heart, when we express him in our actions: for so the apostle says, \* *He that is in Christ, walks as he also walked.* But thus the actions of our life relate to him by way of worship and religion; but the use is admirable and effectual, when our actions refer to him as to our copy, and we transcribe the original to the life. He that considers with what affections and lancements of spirit, with what effusions of love Jesus prayed, what fervors and assiduity, what innocency of wish, what modesty of posture, what subordination to his Father, and conformity to the divine pleasure were in all his devotions, is taught and excited to holy and religious prayers: the rare sweetness of his deportment in all temptations and violences of his passion, his charity to his enemies, his sharp reprehensions to the Scribes and Pharisees, his ingenuity toward all men, are living and effectual sermons to teach us patience and humility, and zeal and candid simplicity, and justice, in all our actions. I add no more instances, because all the following discourses will be prosecutions of this intendment. And the life of Jesus is not described to be like a picture in a chamber of pleasure, only for beauty and entertainment of the eye, but like the Egyptian hieroglyphicks, whose every feature is a precept, and the images converse with men by sense, and signification of excellent discourses.

It was not without great reason advised, that every man should propound the example of a wise and virtuous personage; <sup>a</sup> as Cato, or Socrates, or Brutus; and by a fiction of imagination to suppose him present as a witness, and really to take his life as the direction of all our actions. The best and most excellent of the old law-givers and philosophers among the Greeks, had an allay of viciousness, and could not be exemplary all over: <sup>b</sup> some were noted for flatterers, as Plato and Aristippus; some for incontinency, as Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno, Theognis, Plato, and Aristippus again; and Socrates, whom their oracle affirmed to be the wisest and most perfect man, yet was by Porphyry noted for extreme intemperance of anger both in words and actions: and those Romans who were offered to them for examples, although they were great in reputation, yet they had also great vices. Brutus dipped his hand in the blood of Cæsar his prince, and his father by love, endearments and adoption. And Cato was but a wise man all day, <sup>c</sup> at night he was used to drink too liberally: and both he and Socrates did give their wives unto their friends; <sup>d</sup> the philosopher and the censor were procurers of their wives unchastity: and yet these were the best among the Gentiles. But how happy and richly furnished are Christians with precedents of saints, whose faith and revelations have been productive of more spiritual graces, and greater degrees of moral perfections. And this I call the privilege of a very great assistance, that I might advance the reputation and account of the life of the glorious Jesu, which is not abated by the imperfections of human nature as they were, but receives great heightnings and perfection from the divinity of his person, of which they were never capable.

<sup>a</sup> Seneca, Ep. 11. <sup>b</sup> Athenagoras, lib. 3 et 13, et Theognis de se. Idem testantur Laertius et Lactantius. Hoc notat S. Cyrillus l. 6. contra Julian. <sup>c</sup> Narratur et prisci Catonis sæpe mero caluisse virtus. Horat. <sup>d</sup> Majorum et sapientissimorum disciplina Græci Socratis, et Romani Catonis, qui uxores suas amicis communicaverunt, quas in matrimonium duxerant liberorum causâ, et alibi creandorum, nescio quidem an invitas: quid n. de castitate curarent, quam mariti tam facile donaverant? O sapientiæ Atticæ, O Romanæ gravitatis exemplum! leno est philosophus et censor. Tertull. apolog. c. 39.

Let us therefore press after Jesus, as Elisha did after his master, with an inseparable prosecution, even whither soever he goes; that according to the reasonableness and proportion expressed in S. Paul's advice, <sup>a</sup> *As we have borne the image of the earthly, we may also bear the image of the heavenly. For, in vain are we called Christians, if we live not according to the example and discipline of Christ, the Father of the institution.* <sup>b</sup> When S. Laurence was in the midst of the torments of the gridiron, he made this to be the matter of his joy and eucharist, that he was admitted to the gates through which Jesus had entred: and therefore thrice happy are they *who walk in his courts* all their days. And it is yet a nearer union and vicinity to imprint his life in our souls, and express it in our exterior converse: and this is done by him only who (as S. Prosper describes the duty) despises all those gilded vanities which he despised, that fears none of those sadnesses which he suffered, that practises or also teaches those doctrines which he taught, and hopes for the accomplishment of all his promises. <sup>c</sup> And this is truest religion, and the most solemn adoration.

### THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL, holy, and most glorious Jesu, who hast united two natures of distance infinite, descending to the lownesses of human nature, that thou mightest exalt human nature to a participation of the divinity; we thy people that sate in darkness, and in the shadows of death, have seen great light, to entertain our understandings and enlighten our souls, with its excellent influences; for the excellency of thy sanctity shining gloriously in every part of thy life, is like thy

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 16. 49.

S. Mal.

<sup>b</sup> Dictum Malachiæ Abbat. apud S. Bernardum in vita

<sup>c</sup> Lib. 2 de vita contemplat. cap. 21.

<sup>d</sup> Religiosissimus

cultus imitari. *Lactant.*

angel, the pillar of fire which called thy children from the darkneses of Egypt. Lord open my eyes, and give me power to behold thy righteous glories, and let my soul be so entertained with affections and holy ardors, that I may never look back upon the flames of Sodom, but may follow thy light, which recreates and enlightens and guides us to the mountains of safety, and sanctuaries of holiness. Holy Jesu, since thy image is imprinted on our nature, by creation, let me also express thy image by all the parts of a holy life, conforming my will and affections to thy holy precepts, submitting my understanding to thy dictates and lessons of perfection; imitating thy sweetnesses and excellencies of society, thy devotion in prayer, thy conformity to God, thy zeal tempered with meekness, thy patience heightened with charity, that heart, and hands, and eye, and all my faculties may grow up with the increase of God, till I come to the full measure of the stature of Christ; even to be a perfect man in Christ Jesus, that at last in thy light I may see light, and reap the fruits of glory from the seeds of sanctity in the imitation of thy holy life, O blessed and holy Saviour Jesus. Amen.

THE  
**LIFE**  
OF  
OUR BLESSED LORD AND SAVIOUR,  
**JESUS CHRIST.**

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SECT. I.

*The History of the Conception of Jesus.*

**W**HEN the fulness of time was come, after the frequent repetition of promises, the expectation of the Jewish nation, the longings and tedious waitings of all holy persons, the departure of *the sceptre from Judah, and the law-giver from between his feet*, when the number of Daniel's years were accomplished, and the Egyptian and Syrian kingdoms had their period, God having great compassion towards mankind, remembering his promises and our great necessities, *sent his son into the world*, to take upon him our nature, and all that guilt of sin which stuck close to our nature, and all that punishment which was consequent to our sin, which came to pass after this manner.

In the days of Herod the King, the angel Gabriel was sent from God *to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth*, to a holy maid called *Mary, espoused to Joseph*, and found her in a capacity and excellent disposition to receive the greatest honour that ever was done to the daughters of men. Her employment was holy and pious, her person young, her years florid and springing, her body chaste, her mind humble, and a rare repository of divine graces. *She was full of grace and*

excellencies. And God poured upon her a full measure of honour, in making her the mother of the Messias. *For the angel came to her and said, Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee ; blessed art thou among women.*

We cannot but imagine the great mixture of innocent disturbances and holy passions, that in the first address of the angel did rather discompose her settledness, and interrupt the silence of her spirits, than dispossess her dominion, which she ever kept over those subjects, which never had been taught to rebel beyond the meer possibilities of natural imperfection. But if the angel appeared in the shape of a man, it was an unusual arrest to the blessed Virgin, who was accustomed to retirements, and solitariness, and had not known an experience of admitting a comely person, but a stranger, to her closet and privacies. But if the Heavenly Messenger did retain a diviner form, more symbolical to angelical nature, and more proportionable to his glorious message, although her daily employment was a conversation with angels, who, in their daily ministring to the saints, *did behold her chaste conversation coupled with fear*, yet they used not any affrighting glories in the offices of their daily attendances, but were seen only by spiritual discernings. However, so it happened, that *when she saw him she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.*

But the angel, who came with designs of honour and comfort to her, was not willing that the inequality and glory of the messenger should, like too glorious a light to a weaker eye, rather confound the faculty, than enlighten the organ, did, before her thoughts could find a tongue, invite her to a more familiar confidence than possibly a tender virgin (though of the greatest serenity and composure), could have put on in the presence of such a beauty and such a holiness. *And the angel said unto her, fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.*



The holy Virgin knew herself a person very unlikely to be a mother; for although the desires of becoming a mother to the Messiah were great in every of the daughters of Jacob, and about that time the expectation of his revelation was high and pregnant, and therefore she was espoused to an honest and a just person of her kindred and family, and so might not despair to become a mother, yet she was a person of a rare sanctity, and so mortified a spirit, that for all this desponsation of her, according to the desires of her parents, and the custom of the nation, she had not set one step toward the consummation of her marriage, so much as in thought, and possibly had set herself back from it by a vow of chastity and holy cœlibate. For *Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man.*

But the angel, who was a person of that nature, which knows no conjunctions but those of love and duty knew that the piety of her soul, and the religion of her chaste purposes, was a great imitator of angelic purity, and therefore perceived where the philosophy of her question did consist; and being taught of God, declared that the manner should be as miraculous as the message itself was glorious. For the angel told her, that this should not be done by any way which our sin, and the shame of Adam, had unhallowed, by turning nature into a blush, and forcing her to a retirement from a public attesting the means of her own preservation; but the whole matter was from God, and so should the manner be; for *the angel said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

When the blessed Virgin was so ascertained, that she should be a mother<sup>a</sup> and a maid, and that two

<sup>a</sup> ——— quæ ventre beato,  
Gaudia Matris habens cum Virginitatis honore,  
Nec primam similem visa es nec habere sequentem,  
Sola sine exemplo placuisti fœmina Christo. *Sedul.*

glories, like the two luminaries of Heaven, should meet in her, that she might in such a way become the mother of her Lord, that she might, with better advantages, be his servant; then all her hopes and all her desires received such satisfaction, as filled all the corners of her heart so much, as indeed was fain to make room for its reception. But she to whom the greatest things of religion, and the transportations of devotion were made familiar, by the assiduity and piety of her daily practices, however she was full of joy, yet she was carried like a full vessel, without the violent tossings of a tempestuous passion, or the wrecks of a stormy imagination. And as the power of the Holy Ghost did descend upon her like rain into a fleece of wool, without any obstreperous noises or violences to nature, but only the extraordinariness of an exaltation, so her spirit received it with the gentleness and tranquillity fitted for the entertainment of the spirit of love, and a quietness symbolical to the holy guest of her spotless womb, the Lamb of God; for she meekly replied, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according unto thy word; and the angel departed from her*, having done his message. And at the same time the holy spirit of God did make her to conceive in her womb the immaculate son of God, the Saviour of the World.

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#### Ad. SECT. I.

#### *Considerations upon the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, and the Conception of the Holy Jesus.*

THAT which shines brightest, presents itself first to the eye; and the devout soul, in the chain of excellent and precious things, which are represented in the counsel, design, and first beginnings of the work of our redemption, hath not leisure to attend the

twinkling of the lesser stars, till it hath stood and admired the glory and eminencies of the divine love, manifested in the incarnation of the *word eternal*.<sup>a</sup> God had no necessity in order to the conservation, or the heightening his own felicity, but out of meer and perfect charity and the bowels of compassion, sent into the world his only son for remedy to human miseries, to innoble our nature by an union with divinity, to sanctify it with his justice, to enrich it with his grace, to instruct it with his doctrine, to fortify it with his example, to rescue it from servitude, to assert it into the liberty of the sons of God, and at last to make it partaker of a beatifical resurrection.

God, who, in the infinite treasures of his wisdom and providence, could have found out many other ways for our redemption than the incarnation of his eternal Son, was pleased to choose this, not only that the remedy by man might have proportion to the causes of our ruin, whose introduction and intromission was by the prevarication of man, but also that we might, with freer dispensation, receive the influences of a Saviour with whom we communicate in nature; although Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, were of greater name and current, yet they were not so salutary as the waters of Jordan to cure Naaman's leprosy; and if God had made the remedy of human nature to have come all the way clothed in prodigy, and every instant of its execution had been as terrible, affrighting, and as full of majesty as the apparitions upon Mount Sinai, yet it had not been so useful and complying to human necessities, as was the descent of God to the susception of human nature, whereby (as in all medicaments) the cure is best wrought by those instruments which have the fewest dissonancies to our temper, and are the nearest to our constitution.—For thus the Saviour of the world became human, al-

<sup>a</sup> Cum inter nos & Deum discordiam peccando fecimus, tamen ad nos Deus legatum suum prior misit, ut nos ipsi qui peccavimus, ad pacem Dei rogati veniamus.—S. Gregor.

luring, full of invitation, and the sweetnesses of love, exemplary, humble, and medicinal.

And if we consider the reasonableness of the thing, what can be given more excellent for the redemption of man than the blood of the son of God? And what can more ennoble our nature, than that by the means of his holy humanity it was taken up into the <sup>a</sup> cabinet of the mysterious trinity? What better advocate could we have for us, than he that is appointed to be our Judge? And what greater hopes of reconciliation can be imagined, than that God, in whose power it is to give an absolute pardon, hath taken a new nature, entertained an office, and undergone a life of poverty, with a purpose to procure our pardon? For now, though as the righteous Judge he will judge the nations righteously, yet, by the susception of our nature, and its apendant crimes, he is become a party; and having obliged himself as man, as he is God, he will satisfy, by putting the value of an infinite merit to the actions and sufferings of his humanity. And if he had not been God, he could not have given us remedy; if he had not been man, we should have wanted the excellency of example.

And till now, human nature was less than that of angels; but by the incarnation of the word was to be exalted above the cherubims; yet the <sup>b</sup> archangel Gabriel being dispatched in embassy, to represent the joy and exaltation of his inferior, instantly trims his wings with love and obedience, and hastens with this narrative to the holy virgin: and if we should reduce our prayers to action, and do God's will on earth, as the angels in Heaven do it, we should promptly execute every part of the divine will, though it were to be instrumental to the exaltation of a brother above ourselves, knowing no end but conformity to the divine will, and making simplicity of intention to be the fringes and exterior borders of our garments.

*a.*

<sup>a</sup> Quod sperare nullus audebat: quod si forte in mentem alicujus incidisset, poterat æstimare se in blasphemiam incurrisse. *S. P. Primasius.*

<sup>b</sup> ἀγαθὸν δ' ἐκεῖς περὶ ὑμῶν ἐδέξατο ἔγγιστα φθόνῳ. *Hier. in Pythag.*

When the eternal God meant to stoop so low as to be fixed to our centre, he chose for his mother a holy person and a maid, but yet affianced to a just man, that he might not only be secure in the innocency, but also provided for in the reputation of his holy mother. Teaching us, that we must not only satisfy ourselves in the purity of our purposes and hearty innocence, but that we must *provide also things honest in the sight of all men*; being free from the suspicion and semblances of evil; so making provision for private innocence and public honesty, it being necessary in order to charity and edification of our brethren, that we hold forth no impure flames or smoaking fire-brands, but pure and trimmed lamps in the eyes of all the world.

And yet her marriage was more mysterious: for as besides the miracle, it was an eternal honour and advancement to the glory of virginity, that he chose a virgin for his mother; so it was in that manner attempted, that the virgin was betrothed, lest honourable marriage might be disreputed, and seem inglorious by a positive rejection from any participation of the honour. <sup>a</sup> Divers of the old doctors, from the authority of Ignatius, add another reason, saying, That the blessed Jesus was therefore born of a woman betrothed, and under the pretence of marriage, that the devil, who knew the Messias was to be born of a virgin, might not expect him there, but so be ignorant of the person, till God had served many ends of Providence upon him.

The angel in his address needed not to go inquisition after a wandering fire, but knew she was a star fixt in her own orb: he found her at home, and lest that also might be too large a circuit, she was yet confined to a more intimate retirement; she was in her oratory private and devout. There are some <sup>b</sup> curiosities so bold and determinate as to tell the very mat-

<sup>a</sup> Origen. homil. 6 in Levit. Hier. Comment. in 1 Matth. S. Basilus et alii.

<sup>b</sup> S. Bernard.

ter of her prayer, and that she was praying for the salvation of all the world, and the revelation of the Messias, desiring she might be so happy, as to kiss the feet of her who should have the glory to be his mother. We have no security of the particular: but there is no piety so diffident, as to require a sign to create a belief that her employment at the instant was holy and religious; but in that disposition she received a grace, which the greatest queens would have purchased with the quitting of their diadems; and hath consigned an excellent document to all women, that they accustom themselves often to those retirements, where none but God and his angels can have admittance. For the holy Jesus can come to them too, and dwell with them, hallowing their souls, and consigning their bodies to a participation of all his glories. But recollecting of all our scattered thoughts and exterior extravagancies, and a receding from the inconveniences of a too free conversation, is the best circumstance to dispose us to a heavenly visitation.

The holy virgin when she saw an angel, and heard a testimony from heaven of her grace and piety, was troubled within her self at the salutation, and the manner of it. For she had learned, that the affluence of divine comforts and prosperous successes should not exempt us from fear, but make it the more prudent and wary, lest it intangle us in a vanity of spirit: God having ordered, that our spirits should be affected with dispositions in some degrees contrary to exterior events, that we be fearful in the affluence of prosperous things, and joyful in adversity, as knowing that this may produce benefit and advantage; and the changes that are consequent to the other, are sometimes full of mischiefs, but always of danger. But her silence and fear were her guardians; that, to prevent excrescencies of joy, this of vainer complacency.

And it is not altogether inconsiderable to observe, that the holy Virgin came to a great perfection and state of piety by a few, and those, modest and even

- exercises, and external actions. S. Paul travelled over the world, preached to the Gentiles, disputed against the Jews, confounded hereticks, writ excellently learned letters, suffered dangers, injuries, affronts and persecutions to the height of wonder, and by these violences of life, action and patience obtained the crown of an excellent religion and devotion. But the holy Virgin, although she was engaged sometimes in an active life, and in the exercise of an ordinary and small economy and government, or ministeries of a family, yet she arrived to her perfections by the means of a quiet and silent piety, the internal actions of love, devotion and contemplation: and instructs us, that not only those who have opportunity and powers of a magnificent religion or a pompous charity, or miraculous conversion of souls, or assiduous and effectual preachings, or exterior demonstrations of corporal mercy, shall have the greatest crowns and the addition of degrees and accidental rewards: but the silent affections, the splendors of an internal devotion, the unions of love, humility and obedience, the daily offices of prayer and praises sung to God, the acts of faith and fear, of patience and meekness, of hope and reverence, repentance and charity, and those graces which walk in a vail and silence, make great ascents to God, and as sure progress to favour and a crown, as the more ostentous and laborious exercises of a more solemn religion. No man needs to complain of want of power or opportunities for religious perfections: a devout woman, in her closet, praying with much zeal and affections for the conversion of souls, is in the same order to a *shining like the stars in glory*, as he, who by excellent discourses puts it into a more forward disposition to be actually performed. And possibly her prayers obtained energy and force to my sermon, and made the ground fruitful, and the seed spring up to life eternal. Many times God is present in the still voice, and private retirements of a quiet religion, and the constant spiritualities of an ordinary life; when the loud and impetuous winds, and the shining fires

of more laborious and expensive actions are profitable to others only, like a tree of balsam distilling precious liquor for others, not for its own use.

### THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL and Almighty God, who didst send thy holy angel in embassy to the blessed Virgin Mother of our Lord, to manifest the actuating thine eternal purpose of the redemption of mankind by the incarnation of thine eternal Son; put me, by the assistances of thy divine grace, into such holy dispositions, that I may never impede the event and effect of those mercies, which in the counsels of thy predestination thou didst design for me. Give me a promptness to obey thee to the degree and semblance of angelical alacrity; give me holy purity and piety, prudence and modesty, like those excellencies which thou didst create in the ever-blessed Virgin, the mother of God: grant that my employment be always holy, unmixt with worldly affections, and as much as my condition of life will bear, retired from secular interests and disturbances, that I may converse with angels, entertain the holy Jesus, conceive him in my soul, nourish him with the expresses of most innocent and holy affections, and bring him forth and publish him in a life of piety and obedience, that he may dwell in me for ever, and I may for ever dwell with him in the house of eternal pleasures and glories world without end. Amen.

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### SECT. II.

*The bearing Jesus in the womb of the blessed Virgin.*

ALTHOUGH the blessed Virgin had a faith as prompt and ready as her body was chaste, and her soul pure, yet God, who uses to give full measure,



'shaken together and running over,' did by way of confirmation and fixing the confidence of her assent give an instance of his omnipotency in the very particular of an extraordinary conception: For the angel said, *Behold, thy cousin Elizabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that was called barren: for with God nothing shall be impossible.* A less argument would have satisfied the necessity of a faith which had no scruple; and a greater would not have done it in the incredulity of an ungentle and pertinacious spirit. But the holy maid had complacency enough in the message, and holy desires about her to carry her understanding as far as her affections, even to the fruition of the angel's message, which is such a sublimity of faith, that it is its utmost consummation, and shall be its crown when our faith, is turned into vision, our hopes into actual possessions, and our grace into glory.

And she, who was now full of God, bearing God in her virgin womb, and the holy Spirit in her heart, who had also overshadowed her, enabling her to a supernatural and miraculous conception, *arose with haste* and gladness to communicate that joy which was designed for all the world; and she found no breast to pour forth the first emanations of her overjoyed heart, so fit as her cousin Elizabeth's, who had received testimony from God to have been *righteous, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless*, who also had a special portion in this great honour; for she was designed to be the mother of the Baptist, who was sent as a forerunner *to prepare the ways of the Lord, and to make his paths straight.* And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste into a city of Judah.

Her haste was in proportion to her joy and desires, but yet went no greater pace than her religion; for as in her journey she came near to Jerusalem, she turned in, that she might visit his temple, whose temple she herself was now; and there, not only to remember the pleasures of religion, which she had felt in continual

descents and showers falling on her pious heart for the space of eleven years attendance there in her childhood, but also to pay the first fruits of her thanks and joy, and to lay all her glory at his feet, whose humble handmaid she was in the greatest honour of being his blessed mother. Having worshipped, she went on her journey, *and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth.*

It is not easy to imagine what a collision of joys was at this blessed meeting; two mothers of two great princes, the one *the greatest that was born of woman*, and the other was his Lord, and these made mothers by two miracles, met together with joy and mysteriousness, where the mother of our Lord, went to visit the mother of his servant, and the Holy Ghost made the meeting festival, and descended upon Elizabeth, and she prophesied. Never but in heaven was there more joy and extasy. The persons, who were women whose fancies and affections were not only hallowed, but made pregnant and big with religion, meeting together to compare and unite their joys, and their eucharist, and then made prophetical and inspired, must needs have discoursed like seraphims and the most extasied order of intelligencies; for all the faculties of nature were turned into grace, and expressed in their way the excellent solemnity. *For it came to pass when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.*

After they had both prophesied and sang their hymns, and resaluted each other with the religion of saints, and the joys of angels, *Mary abode with her cousin Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her own house.* Where when she appeared with her holy burden to her husband Joseph, and that he perceived her to be with child, and knew that he had never unsealed that holy fountain of virginal purity, he was troubled. For although her deportment had been pious and chaste to a miracle, her carriage reserved, and so grave that she drove away temptations and impure vi-

sits, and all unclean purposes from the neighbourhood of her holy person; yet when he saw she was with child, and had not yet been taught a lesson higher than the principles of nature, he was minded to put her away, for he knew she was with child; but yet privily, because he was a good man, and knew her piety to have been such that it had almost done violence to his sense, and made him disbelieve what was visible and notorious, and therefore he would do it privately. *But while he thought on these things, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.*

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## Ad. SECT II.

### *Considerations concerning the circumstances of the interval between the Conception and Nativity.*

WHEN the blessed Virgin was ascertained of the manner of her becoming a mother, and that her tremblings were over upon the security she should preserve her virgin purity as a clean oblation to the honour of God, then she expressed her consent to the angelical message, and instantly she conceived the holy Jesus in her womb by the supernatural and divine influence of the Holy Ghost. For she was highly zealous to reconcile her being mother to the Messiah, with those purities and holy coelibate, which she had designed to keep as advantages to the interests of religion, and his honour who chose her from all the daughters of Adam to be instrumental of the restitution of grace and innocence to all her father's family. And we shall receive benefit from so excellent example, if we be not so desirous of a privilege, as of a virtue; of honour as of piety; and as we submit to the weight and pressure of

sadnesses, and infelicities that God's will may be accomplished, so we must be also ready to renounce an exterior grace or favour, rather than it should not be consistent with exemplar and rare piety.

When the Son of God was incarnate in the womb of his virgin-mother, the holy maid arose; and though she was superexalted by an honour of greater than the world yet ever saw, she still dwelt upon the foundation of humility, and to make that virtue more signal and eminent; she arose and went hastily to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who also had conceived a son in her old age! for so we all should be curious and watchful against vanities and transportations, when we are advanced to the gaieties of prosperous accidents, and in the greatest privileges descend to the lowest, to exercise a greater measure of virtue against the danger of those tentations which are planted against our heart to ruin our hopes and glories.

But the joys that the virgin mother had, were such as concerned all the world, and that part of them, which was her peculiar, she would not conceal from persons apt to their entertainment, but go to publish God's mercy toward her to another holy person, that they might join in the praises of God; as knowing, that though it may be convenient to represent our personal necessities in private, yet God's gracious returns, and the blessings he makes to descend on us are more fit, when there is no personal danger collaterally appendant, to be published in the communion of saints; that the hopes of others may receive increase, that their faith may have confirmation, that their charity and eucharist may grow up to become excellent and great, and the praises of God may be sung aloud, till the sound strikes at heaven, and join with the hallelujahs which the morning stars in their orbs pay to their great Creator.

When the holy Virgin had begun her journey, she made haste over the mountains, that she might not only satisfy the desires of her joy by a speedy gratulation, but lest she should be too long abroad, under the dis-

persion and discomposing of her retirements. And therefore she hastens to an inclosure, to her cousin's house, as knowing that all virtuous women, like tortoises, carry their house on their heads, and their chapel in their heart, and their danger in their eye, and their souls in their hands, and God in all their actions. And indeed, her very little burden, which she bare, hindered her not, but she might make haste enough; and as her spirit was full of cheerfulness and alacrity, so even her body was made airy and vegeate; for there was no sin in her burden to fill it with natural inconveniences; and there is this excellency in all spiritual things, that they do no disadvantage to our persons, nor retard our just temporal interests. And the religion by which we carry Christ within us, is neither so peevish, as to disturb our health; nor so sad, as to discompose our just and modest cheerfulness; nor so prodigal, as to force us to needs, and ignoble trades; but recreates our body by the medicine of holy fastings and temperance; fills us full of serenities and complacencies by the sweetnesses of a holy conscience, and joys spiritual; promotes our temporal interests by the gains and increases of the rewards of charity, and by securing God's providence over us, while we are in the pursuit of the heavenly kingdom. And as in these dispositions she climbed the mountains with much facility: so there is nothing in our whole life of difficulty so great but it may be managed by those assistances we receive from the holiest Jesus, when we carry him about us; as the vallies are exalted, so the mountains are made plain before us.

When her cousin Elizabeth saw the mother of her Lord come to visit her, as the Lord himself descended to visit all the world in great humility, she was pleased and transported to the height of wonder, and prophecy, and the babe sprang in her womb and was sanctified, first doing his homage and adoration to his Lord, that was in presence. And we also, although we can do nothing, unless the Lord first present us with his gracious visitation; yet if he first come unto

us, and we accept and entertain him with the expresses and correspondencies of our duty, we shall receive the grace and honour of sanctification. But if St. Elizabeth, who received testimony from God that she walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless, was carried into extasy wondering at the dignation and favour done to her, by the mother of her Lord; with what preparations and holy solemnities ought we to entertain his addresses to us by his holy sacrament, by the immissions of his Spirit, by the assistances of his graces, and all other his vouchsafings and descents into our hearts.

The blessed Virgin hearing her cousin full of spirit and prophecy, calling her blessed, and praising her faith and confirming her joy, instantly sang her hymn to God, returning those praises which she received to him to whom they did appertain. For so we should worship God with all our praises, being willing upon no other condition to extend one hand to receive our own honour, but that with the other we might transmit it to God. That as God is honoured in all his creatures, so he may be honoured in us too: looking upon the graces which God hath given us, but as greater instruments and abilities to serve him, being none of ours, but talents which are entrusted into our hands to be improved. But as a precious pearl is orient and medicinal, because God hath placed those excellencies in it for ends of his own, but itself is dead to all apprehensions of it, and knows no reflections upon its own value; only God is magnified in his work: so is every pious person, precious, and holy, but mortified to all vainer complacencies in those singularities and eminencies which God placed there, because he was so pleased; saying, there he would have a temple built; because from thence he would take delight to receive glory and adoration.

After all these holy and festival joys, which the two glad mothers feasted themselves withal, a sad cloud did intervene and passed before the face of the blessed Virgin. The just and righteous Joseph her espoused husband, perceiving her to be with child, was minded

to put her away, as, not knowing the divinity of the fountain which watered the Virgin's sealed and hal-  
lowed womb, and made it fruitful. But he purposed  
to do it privily, that he might preserve the reputation  
of his spouse, whose piety he knew was great, and was  
sorrowful it should now set in a sad night, and be ex-  
tinct. But it was an exemplar charity, and reads to  
us a rule for our deportment towards erring and lap-  
sed persons, that we intreat them with meekness and  
pity, and fear: not hastening their shame, nor provo-  
king their spirit, nor making their remedy desperate,  
by using of them rudely, till there be no worse thing  
for them to fear if they should be dissolved into all li-  
centiousness. For an open shame is commonly pro-  
tested unto, when it is remediless. and the person either  
despairs and sinks under the burden, or else grows  
impudent and tramples upon it. But the gentleness  
of a modest and charitable remedy, preserves that  
which is virtue's girdle, fear and blushing; and the  
beginning of a punishment chides them into the horror  
of remembrance and guilt, but preserves their meek-  
ness and modesty, because they not feeling the worst  
of evils, dare not venture upon the worst of sins.

But it seems the blessed Virgin having received this  
greatest honour, had not made it known to her husband  
Joseph, and when she went to her cousin Elizabeth,  
the Virgin was told of it by her cousin, before she  
spake of it herself, for her cousin had it by revelation  
and the spirit of prophecy. And it is in some cir-  
cumstances, and from some persons more secure to  
conceal visions, and those heavenly gifts which create  
estimations among men, than to publish them, which  
may possibly minister to vanity; and those exterior  
graces may do God's work, though no observer note  
them, but the person for whose sake they are sent.  
Like rain falling in uninhabited vallies, where no eye  
observes showers; yet the vallies laugh and sing to  
God in their refreshment without a witness. How-

ever, it is better to hear the report of our good things from the mouths of others, than from ourselves: and better yet if the beauty of the tabernacle be covered with skins, that none of our beauties be seen but by worshippers, that is, when the glory of God, and the interests of religion or charity are concerned in their publication. For so it happened to be in the case of the blessed Virgin, as she related to her cousin Elizabeth; and so it happened not to be, as she referred to her husband Joseph.

The holy Virgin could not but know, that Joseph would be troubled with sorrow, and insecure apprehensions concerning her being with child, but such was her innocence and her confidence in God, that she held her peace, expecting which way God would provide a remedy to the inconvenience; for if we *commit ourselves to God in well doing as unto a faithful Creator*, preserving the tranquillity of our spirits, and the evenness of our temper in the assault of infamy and disreputation, God, who loves our innocence, will be its patron, and will assert it from the scandal, if it be expedient for us; if it be not, it is not fit we should desire it. But if the holy Jesus did suffer his mother to fall into misinterpretation and suspect, which could not but be a great affliction to her excellent spirit, rarely tempered as an eye, highly sensible of every ruder touch; we must not think it strange, if we be tried and pressed with a calamity and unhandsome accidents: only remember, that God will find a remedy to the trouble, and will sanctify the affliction, and secure the person, if we be innocent as was the holy Virgin.

But Joseph was not hasty in the execution of his purposes, nor of making his thoughts determinate, but stood long in deliberation, and longer before he acted it, because it was an invidious matter, and a rigour: he was first to have defamed and accused her publickly, and being convicted, by the law, she was to die, if he had gone the ordinary way: but he who was



<sup>a</sup> *a just man*, that is, <sup>b</sup> according to the style of scripture, and other wise writers, *a good, a charitable man*, found that it was more agreeable to justice to treat an offending person with the easiest sentence, than to put things to extremity, and render the person desperate, and without remedy, and provoked by the suffering of the worst of what she could fear. No obligation to justice does force a man to be cruel, or to use the sharpest sentence. A just man does justice to every man, and to every thing; and then, if he be also wise, he knows there is a debt of mercy and compassion due to the infirmities of a man's nature; and that debt is to be paid: and he that is cruel and ungentle to a sinning person, and does the worst thing to him, dies in his debt, and is unjust. Pity, and forbearance, and long suffering, and fair interpretation, and excusing our brother, and taking things in the best sense, and passing the gentlest sentence, are as certainly our duty, <sup>c</sup> and owing to every person that does offend and can repent, as calling men to account can be owing to the law, and are first to be paid; and he that does not so, is an unjust person: which because Joseph was not, he did not call furiously for justice, or pretend that God required it at his hands presently, to undo a suspected person; but waved the killing letter of the law, and secured his own interest and his justice too, by intending to dismiss her privately. But, before the thing was irremediable, God ended his question by a heavenly demonstration, and sent an angel to reveal to him the innocence of his spouse, and the divinity of her Son; and that he was an immediate derivative from heaven, and the heir of all the world. And in all our doubts we shall have a resolution from heaven or some of its ministers, if we have recourse thither for a guide, and be not hasty in our discourses, or inconsiderate in our purposes, or rash in judgment. For

<sup>a</sup> Joh. 1. 9.<sup>b</sup> Psal. 111. 3. δικαιοσύνη, χρηστότης, ἀγαθότης, φιλελεος. Philostr.

de vita Apollon. l. 3. c. 7.

<sup>c</sup> Non solum ab ultionis atrocitate, sed etiam ab accusationis severitate aliena justī persona est. Ambros.

God loves to give assistances to us, when we most fairly and prudently endeavour, that grace be not put to do all our work, but to facilitate our labour: not creating new faculties, but improving those of nature. If we consider warily, God will guide us in the determination. But a hasty person out-runs his guide, prevaricates his rule, and very often engages upon error.

### THE PRAYER.

O HOLY Jesu, son of the eternal God, thy glory is far above all heavens, and yet thou didst descend to earth, that thy descent might be the more gracious, by how much thy glories were admirable, and natural, and inseparable: I adore thy holy humanity with humble veneration, and the thankful addresses of religious joy, because thou hast personally united human nature to the eternal word, carrying it above the seats of the highest cherubim. This great and glorious mystery is the honour and glory of man: it was the expectation of our fathers, who saw the mysteriousness of thy incarnation at great and obscure distances: and blessed be thy name, that thou hast caused me to be born after the fulfilling of thy prophecies, and the consummation and exhibition of so great a love, so great mysteriousness. Holy Jesu, though I admire and adore the immensity of thy love and condescension, who wert pleased to undergo our burdens and infirmities for us, yet I abhor myself, and detest my own impurities, which were so great and contradictory to the excellency of God, that to destroy sin and save us, it became necessary that thou shouldst be sent into the world, to die our death for us, and to give us of thy life.

### II.

DEAREST Jesu, thou didst not breathe one sigh nor shed one drop of blood, nor weep one tear, nor suffer one stripe, nor preach one sermon for the salva-

tion of the devils; and what sadness and shame is it then, that I should cause so many insufferable loads of sorrows to fall upon thy sacred head? Thou art wholly given for me, wholly spent upon my uses, and wholly for every one of the elect. Thou in the beginning of the work of our redemption didst suffer nine months imprisonment in the pure womb of thy holy mother, to redeem me from the eternal servitude of sin and its miserable consequents. Holy Jesu, let me be born anew, receive a new birth and a new life, imitating thy graces and excellencies by which thou art beloved of thy father, and hast obtained for us a favour and atonement. Let thy holy will be done by me, let all thy will be wrought in me, let thy will be wrought concerning me, that I may do thy pleasure, and submit to the dispensation of thy providence, and conform to thy holy will, and may for ever serve thee in the communion of saints, in the society of thy redeemed ones, now and in the glories of eternity. Amen.

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### SECT III.

#### *The Nativity of our blessed Saviour Jesus.*

THE holy maid longed to be a glad mother, and she who carried a burden, whose proper commensuration is the days of eternity, counted the tedious minutes, expecting when the sun of righteousness should break forth from his bed, where nine months he hid himself as behind a fruitful cloud. About the same time God, who in his infinite wisdom does centre and tie together in one end, things of disparate and disproportionate natures, making things improbable to co-operate to what wonder or to what truth he pleases, brought the holy Virgin to Bethlehem the city of David to be taxed with her husband Joseph, according to a decree upon all the world issuing from Au

gustus Caesar. <sup>a</sup> But this, happened in this conjunction of time, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Micah: *And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall rule my people Israel.* This rare act of providence was highly remarkable, because this taxing seems wholly to have been ordered by God to serve and minister <sup>b</sup> to the circumstances of this birth. For this taxing was not in order to tribute. Herod was now king, and received all the revenues of the fiscus, and paid to Augustus an appointed tribute after the manner of other kings, friends and relatives of the Roman empire; <sup>c</sup> neither doth it appear that the Romans laid a new tribute on the Jews before the confiscation of the goods of Archelaus. Augustus therefore sending especial delegates to tax every city, made only an inquest after the strength of the Roman empire in men and monies: and did himself no other advantage, but was directed by him who rules and turns the hearts of princes, that he might by verifying a prophecy, signify and publish the divinity of the mission and the birth of Jesus.

She that had conceived by the operation of that spirit who dwells within the element of love, was no ways impeded in her journey, by the greatness of her burden, but arrived at Bethlehem in the throng of strangers, who had so filled up the places of hospitality and public entertainment, that there was no room for Joseph and Mary in the inn. But yet she felt that it was necessary to retire where she might softly lay her burden, who began now to call at the gates of his prison, and nature was ready to let him forth. But she that was mother to the King of all the creatures, could find no other but a stable, <sup>d</sup> a caye of a rock, whither she reti-

<sup>a</sup> Ἡ δὲ ἐν τούτῳ δευτέρῳ ἡ τεσσαρακὸς ἐστὶ τῆς Αἰγύπτου βασιλείας, Αἰγύπτῳ δ' ἐκπαρῆς ἡ τῆς τελευταίας Ἀντωνίας ἡ Κλεοπάτρας ὄψιν ἐστὶν Euseb. l. i. c. 6. *Histor. Eccles. Anno sell. tertio Olympiad: 194. Caesar: Augusto et Plantio Silano Coss.* <sup>b</sup> Ὁ Αἰγύπτου ὑπερεταίνα τῷ ἐν Βυβλίῳ τόκῳ διὰ τὴν προτάγμην τῆς ἀπογραφῆς. S. Chrysost. hom. 8. in Matth. <sup>c</sup> Vide Suidam in verbo ἀπογραφή Dio lib. 56. ἐπημύον ἄλλης ἄλλῃ, τότε πᾶν ἰδιωτῶν, ἡ τὰ τῶν πόλεων ἀπογραφάμενος. <sup>d</sup> Juxta propheticum illud. Isay 33. 15. ἐπὶ οἰκῇ ἐν ὑψηλῇ σπηλαίῳ πέτρας ισχυράς ἀρτὸ δοθῆσεται αὐτῷ. apud LXX. Sed hanc periodum Judæi eraserunt ex Hebræo textu. Sic et Symmachus, ἀρτὸ δοθῆσεται mystice Bethlehem, sive domus paupis indigitatur.

red, where when it began to be with her after the manner of women, she humbly bowed her knees, in the posture and guise of worshippers; and in the midst of glorious thoughts and highest speculation, *brought forth her first born into the world.*

As there was no sin in the conception, so neither had she pains in the production, as the church from the days of Gregory Nazianzen until now hath piously believed; though before his days there were some opinions to the contrary, but certainly neither so pious, nor so reasonable. For to her alone did not the punishment of Eve extend, *that in sorrow she should bring forth.* For where nothing of sin was an ingredient, there misery cannot cohabit. For though amongst the daughters of men many conceptions are innocent and holy, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer, hallowed by marriage, designed by prudence, seasoned by temperance, conducted by religion towards a just, an hallowed and a holy end, and yet their productions are in sorrow; yet this of the blessed virgin might be otherwise; because here, sin was no relative, and neither was in the principle, nor the derivative, in the act nor in the habit, in the root or in the branch: there was nothing in this but the sanctification of a virgin's womb, and that could not be the parent of sorrow, especially that gate not having been opened by which the curse always entered. And as to conceive by the Holy Ghost was glorious so to bring forth any of *the fruits of the spirit*, is joyful, and full of felicities. And he that came from his grave fast tied with a stone and signature, and into the college of apostles, *the doors being shut*, and into the glories of his Father through the solid orbs of all the firmament, came also (as the church piously believes) into the world so, without doing violence to the virginal and pure body of his mother, that he did also leave her virginity entire, to be as a seal, that none might open the gate of that sanctuary, that it might be fulfilled

which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, <sup>a</sup> *This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it, because the Lord God of Israel hath entered by it, therefore it shall be shut.*

Although all the world were concerned in the birth of this great prince, yet I find no story of any one that ministered at it, save only angels who knew their duty to their Lord, and the great interests of that person; whom, as soon as he was born, they presented to his mother, who could not but receive him with a joy, next to the rejoicings of glory and beatifick vision, seeing him to be born her son, who was the Son of God; of greater beauty than the sun, purer than angels, more loving than the seraphims, as dear as the eye and heart of God, where he was from eternity engraven, his beloved and his only begotten.

When the virgin mother now felt the first tenderness and yearnings of a mother's bowels, and saw the Saviour of the world born, poor as her fortunes could represent him, naked as the innocence of Adam, she took him, *and wrapt him in swaddling clothes*, and after she had a while cradled him in her arms, she laid him in a manger; for so was the design of his humility; that as the last scene of his life was represented among thieves, so the first was among beasts, the sheep and the oxen; according to that mysterious hymn of the prophet Habbakuk, <sup>b</sup> *His brightness was as the light, he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power.*

But this place, which was one of the great instances of his humility, grew to be as venerable as became an instrument, and it was consecrated into a church, the crib into an altar, where first lay that Lamb of God, which afterwards was sacrificed for the sins of all the world. <sup>c</sup> And when Adrian the emperor, who intended a great despoil to it, built a temple to Venus and Adonis in that place, where the holy virgin mother

<sup>a</sup> Ezek. 44. 2.

<sup>b</sup> Hab. 3. v. 4. In medio animalium cognosceris. Sic LXX.

<sup>c</sup> Ven. Beda de locis sanctis, c. 8. *§. Hieron. Epist. 48.*

and her more holy son, were humbly laid, even so he could not obtain, but that even amongst the Gentile inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, it was held in an account far above scandal and contempt. For God can ennoble even the meanest of creatures, especially if it be but a relative, and instrumental to religion, higher than the injuries of scoffers and malicious persons. But it was then a temple full of religion, full of glory, when angels were the ministers, the holy Virgin was the worshipper, and Christ the Deity.

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### Ad. SECT. III.

#### *Considerations upon the birth of our blessed Saviour Jesus.*

ALTHOUGH the blessed Jesus desired with the ardency of an inflamed love to be born, and to finish the work of our redemption, yet he did not prevent the period of nature, nor break the laws of the womb, and antedate his own sanctions which he had established for ever. He staid nine months, and then brake forth *as a giant joyful to run his course*. For premature and hasty actions, and such counsels as know not how to expect the times appointed in God's decree, are like hasty fruit, or a young person snatched away in his florid age, sad and untimely. He that hastens to enjoy his wish before the time, raises his own expectation, and yet makes it unpleasant by impatience, and loseth the pleasure of the fruition, when it comes, because he hath made his desires bigger than the thing can satisfy. He that must eat an hour before his time, gives probation of his intemperance or his weakness; and if we dare not trust God with the circumstance of the event, and stay his lei-

sure, either we disrepute the infinity of his wisdom, or give clear demonstration of our own vanity.

When God descended to earth, he chose to be born in the suburbs and retirement of a small town, but he was pleased to die at Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea: which chides our shame and pride who are willing to publish our gaities in piazzas, and the corners of the streets of most populous places, but our defects and the instruments of our humiliation we carry into deserts, and cover with the night, and hide them under ground, thinking no secrecy dark enough to hide our shame, nor any theatre large enough to behold our pompous vanities; for so we make provisions for pride, and take great care to exclude humility.

When the holy Virgin now perceived that the expectation of the nations was arrived at the very doors of revelation and entrance into the world, she brought forth the holy Jesus, who like light through transparent glass, past through, or a ripe pomegranate from a fruitful tree, fell to the earth without doing violence to its nurse and parent. She had no ministers to attend, but angels, and neither her poverty nor her piety would permit her to provide other nurses; but herself did the offices of a tender and pious parent. She kissed him and worshipped him, and thanked him that he would be born of her, and she suckled him, and bound him in her arms and swaddling bands, and when she had represented to God her first scene of joy and eucharist, she softly laid him in the manger, till her desires and his own necessities called her to take him, and to rock him softly in her arms: and from this deportment she read a lecture of piety and maternal care, which mothers should perform toward their children when they are born, not to neglect any of that duty which nature and maternal piety requires.

Jesus was pleased to be born of a poor mother in a poor place, in a cold winter's night, far from home, amongst strangers, with all the circumstances of hu-



mility and poverty. And no man will have cause to complain of his coarse robe, if he remembers the swaddling clothes of this holy child: nor to be disquieted at his hard bed, when he considers Jesus laid in a manger: nor to be discontented at his thin table, when he calls to mind the King of heaven and earth was fed with a little breast milk. But since the eternal wisdom of the Father, who knew to chuse the good and refuse the evil, did chuse a life of poverty, it gives us demonstration, that riches and honors, those idols of the world's esteem, are so far from creating true felicities, that they are not of themselves eligible in the number of good things; however, no man is to be ashamed of innocent poverty, of which many wise men make vows, and of which the holy Jesus made election, and his apostles after him made public profession. And if any man will chuse and delight in the affluence of temporal good things, suffering himself to be transported with caitive affections in the pleasures of every day, he may well make a question whether he shall speed as well hereafter, 'since God's usual method is, that they only who follow Christ here, shall be with him for ever.

The condition of the person who was born, is here of greatest consideration. For he that cried in the manger, that sucked the paps of a woman, that hath exposed himself to poverty, and a world of inconveniencies, is *the Son of the living God*; of the same substance with his Father, begotten before all ages, before the morning stars; he is God eternal. He is also by reason of the personal union of the divinity with his human nature, the Son of God, not by adoption, as good men, and beatified angels are; but by an extraordinary and miraculous generation. He is the heir of his Father's glories and possessions, not by succession (for his Father cannot die,) but by an equality of communication: he is the express image of his Father's

\* οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲς θανάτου ἢ Νικηράτου, τρυφῆς ἀπάσης μεταλαβὼντῆς· ἐν βίῃ πεφυγὼν τὸ θάνατον, *Diphilus*.

person according to both natures; the miracle and excess of his Godhead Being, as upon wax, inprinted upon all the capacities of his humanity, And after all this, he is our Saviour; that to our duties of wonder and adoration, we may add the affections of love and union, as himself, besides his being admirable in himself, is become profitable to us. *Vere verbum hoc est abbreviatum*, saith the prophet: the eternal word of the Father is shortened to the dimensions of an infant.

Here then are concentrated the prodigies of greatness and goodness, of wisdom and charity, of meekness and humility; and march all the way in mystery and incomprehensible mixtures, if we consider him in the bosom of his Father, where he is seated by the postures of love and essential felicity, and in the manger where love also placed him, and an infinite desire to communicate his felicities to us. As he is God, his throne is in heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity; as he is man he is circumscribed by an uneasy cradle, and cries in a stable. As he is God, he is seated upon a superexalted throne; as man, exposed to the lowest estate of uneasiness and need. As God, clothed in a robe of glory, at the same instant when you may behold and wonder at his humanity, wrapped in cheap and unworthy cradlebands. As God, he is incircled with millions of angels; as man, in the company of beasts. As God, he is the eternal word of the Father, eternally sustained by himself, all-sufficient and without need; and yet he submitted himself to a condition imperfect, inglorious, indigent, and necessitous; and this consideration is apt and natural to produce great affections of love, duty, and obedience, desires of union and conformity to his sacred person, life, actions, and laws; that we resolve all our thoughts, and finally determine all our reasons, and our passions, and capacities upon that saying of St. Paul, \* *He that loves not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be accursed.*

Upon the consideration of these glories, if a pious soul shall upon the supports of faith and love enter into the stable where this great king was born, and with affections behold every member of the holy body, and thence pass into the soul of Jesus, we may see a scheme of holy meditations, enough to entertain all the degrees of our love, and of our understanding, and make the mystery of the nativity as fruitful of holy thoughts, as it was of blessings to us. And it may serve instead of a description of the person of Jesus conveyed to us in imperfect and apocryphal schemes. If we could behold his sacred feet, with those affections which the holy Virgin did, we have transmitted to us those mysteries in story which she had first in part, by spiritual and divine infused light and afterwards, by observation. Those holy feet tender and unable to support his sacred body, should bear him over all the province of his cure with great zeal for the gaining of souls, to the belief and obedience of his holy laws; those are the feet that should walk upon seas and hills of water as upon firm pavement; at which the lepers and diseased persons should stoop and gather health up; which Mary Magdalen should wash with tears, and wipe with her hair, and anoint with costly nard, as expressions of love and adoration, and there find absolution and remedy for her sins; and which finally should be rent by the nails of the cross, and afterwards ascend above the heavens, making the earth to be his foot-stool. From hence take patterns of imitation, that our piety be symbolical, that our affections be passionate and eucharistical, full of love, and wonder, and adoration, that our feet tread in the same steps, and that we transfer the symbol into mystery, and the mystery to devotion, praying the holy Jesus to actuate the same mercies in us, which were finished at his holy feet, forgiving our sins, healing our sicknesses, and then place ourselves irremovably, becoming his disciples and strictly observing the rules of his holy institution, sitting at the feet of this our greatest Master.

In the same manner a pious person may (with the blessed Virgin) pass to the consideration of his holy hands, which were so often lifted up to God in prayer, whose touch was miraculous and medicinal, cleansing lepers, restoring perishing limbs, opening blind eyes, raising dead persons to life; those hands which fed many thousands by two miracles of multiplication, that purged the Temple from profaneness, that in a sacramental manner bare his own body, and gave it to be the food and refreshment of elect souls; and after, were cloven and rent upon the cross, till the wounds became (after the resurrection) so many transparencies and glorious instruments of solemn, spiritual, and efficacious benediction. Transmit this meditation into affections and practises, lifting up pure hands in prayer, that our devotions be united to the merits of his glorious intercession; and putting ourselves into his hands and holy providence, let us beg those effects upon our souls and spiritual cures, which his precious hands did operate upon their bodies, transferring those similitudes to our ghostly and personal advantages.

We may also behold his holy breast, and consider, that there lay that sacred heart, like the dove within the ark, speaking peace to us, being the regiment of love and sorrows, the fountain of both the sacraments, running out in the two holy streams of blood and water, when the rock was smitten, when his holy side was pierced; and there with St. John let us lay our head, and place our heart, and thence draw a treasure of holy revelations and affections, that we may rest in him only, and upon him lay our burthens, filling every corner of our heart with thoughts of the most amiable and beloved Jesus.

In like manner we may unite the day of his nativity with the day of his passion, and consider all the parts of his body as it was instrumental in all the work of our redemption, and so imitate, and in some proportion partake of that great variety of sweetnesses and amorous reflexes, and gracious intercourses which

passed between the blessed Virgin and the holy child, according to his present capacities, and the clarity of that light which was communicated to her by divine infusion; and all the members of this blessed child, his eyes, his face, his head, all the organs of his senses afford variety of entertainment and motion to our affections, according as they served in their several employments and co-operations in the mysteries of our restitution.

But his body was but his soul's upper garment, and the considerations of this are as immaterial and spiritual as the soul itself, and more immediate to the mystery of the nativity. This soul is of the same nature and substance with ours; in this inferior to the angels, that of itself it is incomplete and discursive in a lower order, of ratiocination; but in this superior, First, that it is personally united to the Divinity, full of the Holy Ghost, overrunning with grace, which was dispensed to it without measure: (and by the mediation of this union, as itself is exalted far above all orders of intelligences, so we also have contracted alliance with God, teaching us not to unravel our excellencies by infamous deportments). Secondly, Here also we may meditate that his memory is indeterminable and unalterable, ever remembering to do us good, and to present our needs to God by the means of his holy intercession. Thirdly, That his understanding is without ignorance, knowing the secrets of our hearts, full of mysterious secrets of his father's kingdom, in which *all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God are hidden*. Fourthly, That his will is impeccable, entertained with an uninterrupted act of love to God, greater then all angels and beatified spirits present to God in the midst of the transportations and ravishments of paradise; that this will is full of love to us, of humility in itself, of conformity to God, wholly resigned by acts of adoration and obedience; it was moved by six wings, zeal of the honour of God, and com-

punction for our sins, pity to our miseries, and hatred of our impieties, desires of satisfying the wrath of God, and great joy at the consideration of all the fruits of his nativity, the appeasing of his Father, the redemption of his brethren. And upon these wings he mounted up into the throne of glory, carrying our nature with him, above the seats of angels. These considerations present themselves to all that with piety and devotion behold the holy babe lying in the obscure and humble place of his nativity.

### THE PRAYER.

HOLY and immortal Jesus, I adore and worship thee with the lowest prostrations and humility of soul and body, and give thee all thanks for that great love to us, whereof thy nativity hath made demonstration; for that humility of thine expressed in the poor and ignoble circumstances which thou didst voluntarily choose in the manner of thy birth, and I present to thy holy humanity inclosed in the adoreable Divinity, my body and soul, humbly desiring that as thou didst cloth thyself with a human body, thou mayest invest me with the robes of righteousness, covering my sins, enabling my weaknesses, and sustaining my mortality, till I shall finally, in conformity to thy beauties and perfections, be clothed with the stole of glory.--- Amen.

### II.

VOUCHSAFE to come to me by a more intimate and spiritual approximation, that so thou mayest lead me to thy Father; for of myself I cannot move one step towards thee. Take me by the hand, place me in thy heart, that there I may live and there I may die: that as thou hast united our nature to thy eternal being, thou mightest also unite my person to thine by the interior adunations of love, and obedience, and conformity. Let thy ears be open to my prayers,

thy merciful eyes look upon my miseries; thy holy hands be stretched out to my relief and succour; let some of those precious distilling tears, which nature and thy compassion and thy sufferings did cause to distil and drop from those sacred fontinels, water my stony heart and make it soft; apt for the impressions of a melting, obedient, and corresponding love; and moisten mine eyes, that I may upon thy stock of pity and weeping mourn for my sins, that so my tears and sorrows being drops of water coming from that holy rock, may indeed be united unto thine, and made precious by such holy mixtures.---Amen.

## III.

BLESSED Jesus, now that thou hast sanctified and exalted human nature, and made even my body precious by a personal uniting it to the Divinity, teach me so reverently to account of it, that I may not dare to profane it with impure lusts or cative affections, and unhallow that ground where thy holy feet have trodden. Give me ardent desires, and efficacious prosecutions of these thy holy effects, which thou didst design for us in thy nativity, and other parts of our redemption: give me great confidence in thee, which thou hast encouraged by the exhibition of so glorious favours; great sorrow and confusion of face at the sight of mine own imperfections, and estrangements and great distances from thee, and the perfections of thy soul, and bring me to thee by the strictnesses of a zealous and affectionate imitation of those sanctities, which next to the hypostatical union, added lustre and excellency to thy humanity, that I may live here with thee in the expresses of a holy life, and die with thee by mortification, and an unwearied patience, and reign with thee in immortal glories, world without end.---Amen.

## DISCOURSE I.

*Of nursing Children, in imitation of the Blessed Virgin Mother.*

THESE latter ages of the world have declined into a softness above the effeminacy of Asian Princes, and have contracted customs which those innocent and healthful days of our ancestors knew not, whose piety was natural, whose charity was operative, whose policy was just and valiant, and whose œconomy was sincere and proportionable to the dispositions and requisites of nature. And in this particular the good women\* of old gave one of their instances; the greatest personages nursed their own children, did the work of mothers, and thought it was unlikely women should become virtuous by ornaments and superadditions of morality, who did decline the laws and prescriptions of nature, whose principles supply us with the first, and most common rules of manners and more perfect actions. In imitation of whom, and especially of the virgin Mary, who was mother and nurse to the holy Jesus, I shall endeavour to correct those softnesses and unnatural rejections of children, which are popular up to a custom and fashion, even where no necessities of nature or just reason can make excuse.

And I cannot think the question despicable, and the duty of meanest consideration, although it be specified in an office of small esteem, and suggested to us by the principles of reason, and not by express sanctions of Divinity. For although other actions are more perfect and spiritual, yet this is more natural and humane; other things being superadded to a full duty rise higher, but this builds stronger, and is like a part of the foundation, having no lustre

\* Quod si pudica mulier in partem juvet Domum, atque dulces liberos: Sabina qualis, aut Perusta solibus pernicis uxor Appuli, Non me Lucrina juverint conchyliæ Magis, &c. *Hor. epod. 2.*



but much strength; and however the others are full of ornament, yet this hath in it some degrees of necessity, and possibly is with more danger and irregularity omitted, than actions which spread their leaves fairer and look more gloriously.

1. Here I first consider that there are many sins in the scene of the body, and the matter of sobriety, which are highly criminal, and yet the laws of God expressed in scripture name them not; but men are taught to distinguish them by that reason which is given us by nature, and is imprinted in our understanding in order to the conservation of human kind. For since every creature hath something in it sufficient to propagate the kind, and to conserve the individuals from perishing in confusions and general disorders, which in beasts we call instinct, that is an habitual or prime disposition to do certain things which are proportionable to the end whither it is designed; man also, if he be not more imperfect, must have the like, and because he knows and makes reflections upon his own acts, and understands the reason of it, that which in them is instinct, in him is natural reason,<sup>a</sup> which is a desire to preserve himself and his own kind, and differs from instinct because he understands his instinct and the reasonableness of it, and they do not. But because man being a higher thing even in the order of creation, and designed to a more noble end, in his animal capacity, his argumentative instinct is larger than the natural instinct of beasts: for he hath instincts in him in order to the conservation of society; and therefore hath principles, that is, he hath natural desires to it for his own good, and because he understands them they are called principles, and laws of nature, but are no other than what I have now declared. For beast do the same things we do, and have many the same inclinations, which in us are the laws of nature, even

<sup>a</sup> *Naturale jus partim. τὸ δίκαιον πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ὁμοίως λυσιτέλεστον, partim, τὸ πρὸς καλοκάγαδιαν ποιῶν ἕκαστος, ὃ μόνον ἰκανὸν διασώζειν τὸν τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίον. Joseph. Origin. 16. 10.*

all which we have in order to our common end. But that which in beasts is nature and an impulsive force, in us must be duty and an inviting power; we must do the same things with an actual or habitual designation of that end to which God designs beasts (supplying by his wisdom their want of understanding), and then what is mere nature in them, in us is natural reason. And therefore marriage in men is made sacred, when the mixtures of other creatures are so merely natural, that they are not capable of being virtuous: because men are bound to intend that end which God made. And this with the superaddition of other ends, of which marriage is representative in part, and in part effective, does consecrate marriage; and makes it holy and mysterious. But then there are in marriage many duties, which we are taught by instinct; that is, by that reason, whereby we understand what are the best means to promote the end which we have assigned us. And by these laws all unnatural mixtures are made unlawful, and the decencies which are to be observed in marriage are prescribed us by this.

2. Upon the supposition of this discourse I consider again, that although to observe this instinct, or these laws of nature (in which I now have instanced), be no great virtue in any eminency of degree (as no man is much commended for not killing himself, or for not degenerating into beastly lusts) yet to prevaricate some of these laws may become almost the greatest sin of the world. And therefore although to live according to nature be a testimony fit to be given to a sober and temperate man, and rises no higher; yet to do an action against nature is the greatest dishonour and impiety in the world (I mean of actions whose scene lies in the body) and disentitles us to all relations to God, and vicinity to virtue.

3. Now among actions which are taught by nature, some concern the being and the necessities of nature; some appertain to her convence and advantage; and the transgressions of these respectively have

their heightnings or depressions; and therefore to kill a man is worse than some præternatural pollutions, because more destructive of the end and designation of nature, and the purpose of instinct.

4. Every part of this instinct is then in some sense a law, when it is in a direct order to a necessary end, and by that is made reasonable. I say (in some sense) it is a law, that is, it is in a near disposition to become a law. It is a rule without obligation to a particular punishment, beyond the effect of the natural inordination and obliquity of the act; it is not the measure of a moral good or evil, but of the natural, that is, of comely and uncomely. For if in the individuals it should fail, or that there pass some greater obligation upon the person in order to a higher end, not consistent with those means designed in order to the lesser end, in that particular it is no fault, but sometimes a virtue. And therefore although it be an instinct, or reasonable towards many purposes, that every one should beget a man in his own image, in order to the preservation of nature, yet if there be a superaddition of another and higher end, and contrary means persuaded in order to it (such as is holy cœlibate or virginity, in order to a spiritual life, in some person) there the instinct of nature is very far from passing obligation upon the conscience, and in that instance ceases to be reasonable. And therefore the Romans, who invited men to marriage with privileges, and punished morose and ungente natures that refused it, yet they had their chaste and unmarried vestals, the first in the order to the commonwealth; these in a nearer order to religion.

5. These instincts or reasonable inducements become laws, obliging us in conscience and in the way of religion, and the breach of them is directly criminal, when the instance violates any end of justice, or charity, or sobriety, either designed in nature's first intention, or superinduced by God or man. For every thing that is unreasonable to some certain purpose, is not presently criminal, much less is it against

the law of nature (unless every man that goes out of his way sins against the law of nature), and every contradicting of a natural desire or inclination is not a sin against a law of nature. For the restraining sometimes of a lawful and a permitted desire is an act of great virtue, and pursues a greater reason; as in the former instance; but those things only, against which such a reason as mixes with charity or justice, or something that is now in order to a further end of a commanded instance of piety, may be without error brought, those things are only criminal. And God having first made our instincts reasonable, hath now made our reason and instincts to be spiritual, and having sometimes restrained our instincts, and always made them regular, he hath by the intermixture of other principles made a separation of instinct from instinct, leaving one in the form of natural inclination, and they rise no higher than a permission or a decency, it is lawful or it is comely so to do (for no man can affirm it to be a duty to kill him that assaults my life, or to maintain my children for ever without their own industry, when they are able, what degrees of natural fondness soever I have towards them; nor that I sin if I do not marry when I can contain); and yet every one of these may proceed from the affections and first inclinations of nature; but until they mingle with justice, or charity, or some instance of religion and obedience, they are no laws; the other that are so mingled being raised to duty and religion. Nature inclines us, and reason judges it apt and requisite in order to certain ends, but then every particular of it is made to be an act of religion from some other principle; as yet it is but fit and reasonable, not religion and particular duty, till God or man hath interposed. But whatsoever particular in nature was fit to be made a law of religion, is made such by the superaddition of another principle; and this is derived to us by tradition from Adam or Noah, or else transmitted to us by the consent of all the world upon a natural and prompt reason, or else by

some other instrument derived to us from God, but especially by the Christian religion, which hath adopted all those things, which we call things honest, things comely, and things of good report, into a law and a duty, as appear *Phil.* 4. 8.

Upon these propositions I shall infer by way of instance, that it is a duty that women should nurse their own children. For first, it is taught to women by that instinct which nature hath implanted in them. For as Phavorinus<sup>a</sup> the philosopher discoursed, it is but to be half a mother to bring forth children and not to nourish them; and it is some kind of abortion or an exposing of the infant, which in the reputation of all wise nations is infamous and uncharitable. And if the name of mother be an appellative of affection and endearments, why should the mother be willing to divide it with a stranger? The earth is the mother of us all, not only because we were made of her red clay, but chiefly that she daily gives us food from her bowels and breasts; and plants and beasts give nourishment to their offsprings, after their production, with greater tenderness than they bare them in their wombs; and yet women give nourishment to the embryo; which whether it be deformed or perfect they know not, and cannot love what they never saw; and yet when they do see it, when they have rejoiced that a child is born, and forgotten the sorrows of production, they who then can first begin to love it, if they begin to divorce the infant from the mother, the object from the affection, cut off the opportunities and occasions of their charity or piety.

For why hath nature given to women two exuberant fontinels, which like two roes that are twins feed among the lillies, and drop milk like dew from Hermon, and hath invited that nourishment from the secret recesses where the infant dwelt at first, up to the breast where naturally now the child is cradled in the entertainments of love and maternal embraces;

\* Apud A. Gellium, l. 12. c. 1.

<sup>a</sup> but that nature having removed the babe, and carried its meat after it, intends that it should be preserved by the matter and ingredients of its constitution, <sup>b</sup> and have the same diet prepared, with a more mature and proportionable digestion? If nature intended them not for nourishment, I am sure it less intended them for pride and wantonness; they are needless excrescences and vices of nature, unless employed in nature's work and proper intendment. And if it be a matter of consideration of what blood children are derived, we may also consider, that the derivation continues after the birth, and therefore abating the sensuality, the nurse is as much the mother, as she that brought it forth; and so much the more, as there is a longer communication of constituent nourishment (for so are the first emanations) in this than in the other. So that here is first the instinct or prime intendment of nature.

2. And that this instinct may also become human and reasonable, we see it by experience in many places that foster children are dearer to the nurse than to the mother, as receiving and ministering respectively perpetual prettinesses of love, and fondness, and trouble, and need, and invitations, and all the instruments of endearment; besides a vicinity of dispositions, and relative tempers by the communication of blood and spirits from the nurse to the suckling, which makes use the more natural, and nature more accustomed. And therefore the affections which these exposed, or derelict children bear to their mothers, have no grounds of nature or assiduity, but civility and opinion; and that little of love

<sup>a</sup> Illicet exundans claustris, erumpere gestit

Humor ———

Si prohibes furit in mammis, turbasq; dolorum

Miscet, & ingrata pœnas à matre reposcit.

*Sammarth Pædotroph.*

<sup>b</sup> Sponte fluunt alimenta suis accommoda rebus,  
Cognatumq; bibant membra haud invita loquorem.

*Id.*

\* which is abated from the foster parents upon public report that they are not natural, that little is transferred to mothers upon the same opinion, and no more. Hence comes those unnatural aversions, those unrelenting dispositions, those carelessnesses and incurious deportments towards their children, which are such ill-sown seeds, from whence may arise up a bitterness of disposition and mutual provocation. The affection which children bear to their nurses, was highly remarked in the instance of Scipio Asiaticus, who rejected the importunity of his brother Africanus, in behalf of the ten captains who were condemned for offering violence to the vestals; but pardoned them at the request of his foster sister; and being asked why he did more for his nurse's daughter than for his own mother's son, gave this answer, "I esteem her rather to be my mother that brought me up, than her that bore me and forsook me." And I have read the observation, That many tyrants have killed their mothers, but never any did violence to his nurse; as if they were desirous to suck the blood of their mother raw, which she refused to give them digested into milk. And the bastard brother of the Gracchi returning from his victories in Asia to Rome, presented his mother with a jewel of silver, and his nurse with a girdle of gold, upon the same account. Sometimes children are exchanged, and artificial bastardies introduced into a family, and the right heir supplanted. It happened so to Artabanus, king of Epirus; his child was changed at nurse and the son of a mean knight succeeded in the kingdom. The event of which was this; the nurse too late discovered the treason, a bloody war was commenced, both the pretenders slain in battle, and the kingdom itself was usurped by Alexander, the brother to Olympias, the wife of Philip the Macedonian. At

\* Obliteratis & abolitis nativæ pietatis elementis, quicquid ita educati liberi amare patrem atque matrem videntur, magnam partem non naturalis ille amor est, sed civitatis, & opinabilis.

*Phavor. apud A. Gellium.*

the best, though there happen no such extravagant and rare accidents, yet it is not likely a stranger should love the child better than the mother; and if the mother's care could suffer it to be exposed, a stranger's care may suffer it to be neglected. For how shall a hireling endure the inconveniencies, the tediousnesses and unhandsomnesses of a nursery; when she, whose natural affection might have made it pleasant out of wantonness or softness hath declined the burthen. But the sad accidents, which by too frequent observations are daily seen happening to nurse children, give great probation that this intendment of nature designing mothers to be the nurses, that their affection might secure and increase their care, and the care best provide for their babes, is most reasonable and proportionable to the discourses of humanity.

But as this instinct was made reasonable, so in this also the reason is in order to grace and spiritual effects; and therefore is among those things which God hath separated from the common instincts of nature, and made properly to be laws, by the mixtures of justice and charity. For it is part of that enducation which mothers as a duty owe to their children that they do in all circumstances, and with all their powers which God to that purpose gave them, promote their capacities and improve their faculties. \* Now in this also, as the temper of the body is considerable in order to the inclinations of the soul, so is the nurse in order to the temper of the body; and a lamb sucking a goat, or a kid sucking of an ewe, change their fleece and hair respectively, say naturalists. For if the soul of a man were put into the body of a mole, it could not see nor speak, because it is not fitted with an instrument apt and organical to the faculty; and when <sup>b</sup>the soul hath its proper instruments, its music

\* Nam Gracchorum eloquentiæ multo contulisse accepimus Corneliam Matrem. *Quint. l. 1. c. 1.*—Protinus & erit parens factus, acrem quam maxime curam impendat. Ante omnia ne sit vitiosus sermo Nutricibus, quas si fieri posset, sapientes Chrysippus optavit. *Quint. l. 1. c. 1.*

<sup>b</sup> γάλα ἀλλότριον βλαβερόν, γάλα ἴδιον ωφέλιμον. *Hippoc. lib. de alimento.*



is pleasant or harsh according to the sweetness or the unevenness of the string it touches. For David himself could not have charmed Saul's melancholy spirit with the strings of his bow, or the wood of his spear. And just so are the actions or dispositions of the soul, angry or pleasant, lustful or cold, querulous or passionate, according as is the body disposed by the various intermixtures of natural qualities. And as the carelessness of nurses have sometimes returned children to their parents crooked, consumptive, half starved, and unclean from the impurities of nature; so their society and their nourishment together, have disposed them to peevishness, to lust, to drunkenness, to pride, to low and base demeanors, to stubbornness. And as a man would have been unwilling to have had a child, by Harpaste, Seneca's wife's fool, so he would, in all reason be as unwilling to have had her to be the nurse: for very often mothers by the birth do not transmit their imperfections, yet seldom it happens but the nurse does. Which is the more considerable, because nurses are commonly persons of no great rank, certainly lower than the mother, and by consequence more like to return their children with the lower and more servile conditions; and commonly these vainer people teach them to be peevish, and proud, to lye, or at least seldom give them any first principles contrary to the nurse's vice. And therefore it concerns the parents care, in order to a virtuous or vicious life of the child, to secure its first seasonings; because, whatever it sucks in first it swallows and believes infinitely, and practises easily, and and continues longest.<sup>c</sup> And this is more proper for a mother's care, while the nurse thinks that giving the child suck, and keeping its body clean, is all her duty. But the mother cannot think herself so easily discharged. And this consideration is material in all cases, be the choice of the nurse never so prudent and curious: it is not easily apprehended to be the portion

<sup>c</sup> καθάπερ αἱ τίτθαι γὰρ σίλίζεις κακῶς. *Aristoph in militibus.*  
 πάλαι ἡμέτερον, ἄλλοτε μήτηρ. *Fictum proverb.*

<sup>b</sup> Ἄλλοτε μητρὸν

of her care to give it spiritual milk, and therefore it intrenches very much upon impiety, and positive relinquishing the education of their children, when mothers expose the spirit of the child, either to its own weaker inclinations, or the wicked principles of an ungodly nurse, or the carelessness of any less obliged person.

And then let me add, that a child sucks the nurse's milk, and digests her conditions; if they be never so bad, seldom gets any good. For virtue being superaddition to nature, and perfections not radical in the body, but contradictions to, and meliorations of natural indispositions, does not easily convey itself by ministrations of food, as vice does, which in most instances is nothing but meer nature grown to custom, and not mended by grace; so that it is probable enough, such natural distemperatures may pass in the rivulets of milk, like evil spirits in a white garment, when virtues are of harder purchase, and dwell so low in the heart, that they but rarely pass through the fountains of generation. And therefore let no mother venture her child upon a stranger, whose heart she less knows than her own. And because few of those nicer women think better of others than themselves, (since out of self love they neglect their own bowels) it is but an act of improvidence to let my child derive imperfections from one of whom I have not so good an opinion as of myself.

And if those many blessings and holy prayers which the child needs, or his askings or sicknesses, or the mother's fears or joys respectively do occasion, should not be cast into this account; yet those principles, which in all cases wherein the neglect is vicious, are the causes of the exposing the child are extremely against the piety and charity of christian religion; which prescribes severity and austere deportment, and the labours of love, and exemplar tenderness of affections, and piety to children, which

are the most natural and nearest relations the parents have. That religion which command us to visit and to tend sick strangers, and wash the feet of the poor, and dress their ulcers, and sends us upon charitable embassies into unclean prisons, and bids us lay down our lives for one another, is not pleased with a niceness and sensual curiosity (that I may not name the wantonnesses of lusts) which denies suck to our own children. What is more humane and affectionate than christianity? and what is less natural and charitable than to deny the expresses of a mother's affection; which certainly to good women is the greatest trouble in the world, and the greatest violence to their desires, if they should not express and minister?

And it would be considered, whether those mothers, who have neglected their first duties of piety and charity, can expect so prompt and easy returns of duty and piety from their children, whose best foundation is love, and that love strongest which is most natural, and that most natural which is conveyed by the first ministeries and impresses of nourishment and education? And if love descends more strongly than it ascends, and commonly falls from the parents upon the children in cataracts, and returns back again up to the parents but in gentle dews; if the child's affection keeps the same proportions towards such unkind mothers, it will be as little as atoms in the sun, and never express itself but when the mother needs it not, that is, in the sun-shine of a clear fortune.

This then is amongst those instincts which are natural, heightened first by reason, and then exalted by grace into the obligation of a law; and being amongst the sanctions of nature, its prevarication is a crime very near those sins, which divines, in detestation of their malignity, call sins against nature: and is never to be excused, but in cases of necessity or greater charity, as when the mother cannot be a nurse, by reason of natural disability, or be afflicted with a dis-

\* *Necessitas magnum imbellicitatis humanæ patrocinium quicquid cogit excusat. Senec.*

ease, which might be transmitted in the milk, or in case of the public necessities of a kingdom, for the securing of succession in the royal family. And yet concerning this last, Lycurgus made a law, that the noblest among the Spartan women, though their king's wives, should at least nurse their eldest son, and the plebeians should nurse all theirs: and Plutarch reports that the second son of king Themistes inherited the kingdom in Sparta only, because he was nursed with his mother's milk, and the eldest was therefore rejected, because a stranger was his nurse. And that queens have suckled and nursed their own children, is no very unusual kindness in the simplicity and hearty affections of elder ages, as is to be seen in Herodotus and other historians; I shall only remark one instance out of the Spanish Chronicles, which Henry Stephens in his apology for Herodotus reports to have heard from thence related by a noble personage, Monsieur Marillac; that a Spanish lady married into France nursed her child with so great a tenderness and jealousy, that having understood the little Prince once to have sucked a stranger, she was unquiet till she had forced him to vomit it up again. In other cases, the crime lies at their door who inforce neglect upon the other, and is heightened in proportion to the motive of the omission; as if wantonness or pride be the parent of the crime, the issue, besides its natural deformity, hath the excrescences of pride or lust to make it more ugly.

To such mothers I propound the example of the holy Virgin, who had the honour to be visited by an angel, yet after the example of the saints in the Old Testament, she gave to the holy Jesus drink from those bottles which himself had filled for his own drinking; and her paps were as surely blessed for giving him suck, as her womb for bearing him; and reads a lecture of piety and charity, which if we deny to our children, there is then in the world left no argument or relation great enough to kindle it from a cinder to a flame. God gives dry breasts for a curse

to some, for an affliction to others; but those that invite it to them by voluntary arts, *Love not blessing, therefore shall it be far from them.* And I remember that it was said concerning Annius Minutius, the censor, that he thought it a prodigy and extremely ominous to Rome, that a Roman lady refused to nurse her child, and yet gave suck to a puppy, that her milk might with more safety be dried up with artificial applications. Let none therefore divide the interests of their own children; for she that appeared before Solomon and would have the child divided, was not the true mother, and was the more culpable of the two.

### THE PRAYER.

O HOLY and eternal God, father of the creatures, and king of all the world, who hast imprinted in all the sons of thy creation, principles and abilities to serve the end of their own preservation, and to men hast superadded reason; making those first propensities of nature to be reasonable in order to society, and a conversation in communities and bodies politic; and hast by several laws and revelations directed our reasons to nearer applications to thee, and performance of thy great end, the glory of our Lord and Father. Teach me strictly to observe the order of creation and the designs of the creatures; that in my order I may do that service, which every creature does in its proper capacity; Lord let me be as constant in the ways of religion, as the sun in his course; as ready to follow the intimations of thy spirit, as little birds are to obey the directions of thy providence and the conduct of thy hand; and let me never by evil customs, or vain company, or false persuasions, extinguish those principles of morality, and right reason which thou hast imprinted in my understanding, in my creation and education, and which thou hast ennobled by the su-

peradditions of Christian institution; that I may live according to the rules of nature in such things which she teaches, modestly, [temperately and affectionately, in all the parts of my natural and political relations; and that I proceeding from nature to grace may henceforth go on from grace to glory, the crown of all obedience, prudent and holy walking, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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#### SECT. IV.

*Of the great and glorious accidents happening about the birth of Jesus.*

ALTHOUGH the birth of Christ was destitute of the usual excrescencies and less necessary pomps which used to signify and illustrate the birth of princes; yet his first humility was made glorious with presages, miracles, and significations from heaven, which did not only, like the furniture of a princely bed-chamber, speak the riches of the parent, or greatness of the son within its own walls, but did declare to all the world that their prince was born, publishing it with figures and representments almost as great as its empire.

For when all the world did expect that in Judea should be born their prince, and that the incredulous world had in their observation, slipped by their true prince, because he came not in pompous and secular illustrations; upon that very stock \*Vespasian was nursed up in hope of the Roman empire, and that hope made him great in designs, and they being prosperous made his fortunes correspond to his hopes, and he was endeared and engaged upon that fortune by the prophecy which was never intended him by

\* Sueton. in vita Vesp. Vide etiam Ciceron. de Divin.

the prophet. But the fortune of the Roman monarchy was not great enough for this prince designed by the old prophets. And therefore it was not without the influence of a Divinity<sup>a</sup> that his decessor Augustus about the time of Christ's nativity refused to be called Lord; possibly it was to entertain the people with some hopes of restitution of their liberties, till he had griped the monarchy with a stricter and faster hold; but the Christians were apt to believe that it was upon the prophecy of a sibyl foretelling the birth of a greater prince, to whom all the world should pay adoration; and that the prince was about that time born in Judea, <sup>b</sup>the oracle which was dumb to Augustus's question, told him unmasked; the devil having no tongue permitted him, but one to proclaim that *an Hebrew child was his Lord and enemy*.

At the birth of which child there was an universal peace through all the world. For then it was that Augustus Cæsar having composed all the wars of the world, did the third time cause the gates of Janus's temple to be shut; and this peace continued for twelve years, even till the extreme old age of the prince, until rust had sealed the temple doors, which opened not, till the sedition of the Athenians and the rebellion of the Dacians caused Augustus to arm. For he that was born was the *prince of peace*, and came to reconcile God with man, and man with his brother; and to make by the sweetness of his example, and the influence of a holy doctrine such happy atonements between disagreeing natures, such confederations and societies between enemies, <sup>c</sup>*That the wolf and the lamb should lie down together*, and a little child boldly and without danger put his finger in the nest and cavern of an asp; and it could be no less than miraculous, that so great a body as the Roman empire, consisting of so many parts, whose constitutions were differing,

<sup>a</sup> Orosius, l. 6. c. 22.<sup>b</sup> Suidas in histor. Verb. Augustus.<sup>c</sup> Esa. 1. 6.<sup>c</sup> Orosius

their humours contrary, their interests contradicting each other's greatness, and all these violently oppressed by an usurping power, should have no limb out of joint, not so much as an aching tooth, or a rebelling humour in that huge collection of parts: but so it seemed good in the éye of heaven, by so great and good a symbol to declare not only the greatness but the goodness of the prince that was then born in Judea, the Lord of all the world.

But because the heavens, as well as the earth, are his creatures and do serve him, at his birth he received a sign *in heaven above*, as well as *in the earth beneath*, as an homage paid to their common Lord. For as certain shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks by night, near that part where Jacob did use to feed his cattle when he was in the land of Canaan, *the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them.* Needs must the shepherds be afraid, when an angel came arrayed in glory, and clothed their persons in a robe of light, great enough to confound their senses and scatter their understandings. *But the angel said unto them, Fear not, for I bring unto you tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.* The shepherds needed not be invited to go see this glorious sight, but lest their fancy should rise up to an expectation of a prince as externally glorious as might be hoped for upon the consequence of so glorious an apparition, the angel to prevent the mistake told them of a sign, which indeed was no other than the thing signified; but yet was therefore a sign, because it was so remote from the common probability and expectation of such a birth, that by being a miracle, so great a prince should be born so poorly, it became an instrument to signify itself and all the other parts of mysterious consequence. *For the angel said, this shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the babe wrapt in swaddling clothes lying in a manger.*



But as light, when it first begins to gild the east, scatters indeed the darkneses from the earth, but ceases not to increase its flame, till it hath made perfect day; so it happened now in this apparition of the angel of light, he appeared and told his message, and did shine, but the light arose higher and higher till midnight was as bright as midday; *for suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host*: and after the angel had told his message in plain song, the whole chorus joined in descant, and sang a hymn to the tune and sense of heaven, where glory is paid to God in eternal and never ceasing offices, and whence good will descends upon men in perpetual and never stopping torrents: their song was, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men*:<sup>a</sup> by this song not only referring to the strange peace which at that time put all the world in ease, but to the great peace which this new born prince should make between his Father and all mankind.

As soon as these blessed choristers had sung their Christmas carol, and taught the church a hymn to put into her offices for ever, in the anniversary of this festivity, *the angels returned into heaven, and the shepherds went to Bethlehem to see this thing which the Lord had made known unto them. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph; and the babe lying in a manger*. Just as the angel had prepared their expectation they found the narrative verified, and saw the glory and the mystery of it by that representment which was made by the heavenly ministers, seeing God through the vail of a child's flesh, the heir of heaven wrapped in swaddling clothes, and a person to whom the angels did minister laid in a manger. And they beheld and wondered and worshipped.

<sup>a</sup> Igitur eo tempore, i. e. eo anno quo firmissimam verissimamque pacem ordinatione Dei Cæsar composuit, natus est Christus; cujus adventui pax ista famulata est: in cujus ortu audientibus hominibus exultantes angeli ceciperunt, Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terrâ pax, &c. P. Orosius.

But as precious liquor warmed and heightened by a flame, first crowns the vessel, and then dances over its brim into the fire, increasing the cause of its own motion and extravagancy: so it happened to the shepherds, whose hearts being filled with the oil of gladness up unto the brim, the joy ran over, as being too big to be confined in their own breasts, and did communicate itself, growing greater by such dissemination: *for when they had seen it they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.* And (as well they might) *all that heard it wondered.* But Mary, having first changed her joy into wonder, turned her wonder into entertainments of the mystery, and the mystery into a fruition and cohabitation with it. *For Mary kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart.* And the shepherds having seen what the angels did upon the publication of the news, which less concerned them than us, had learnt their duty to sing an honour to God for the nativity of Christ, *for the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.*

But the angels had told the shepherds that the nativity was *glad tidings of great joy unto all people*; and that *the heavens might declare the glory of God, and the firmament shew his handy work.* This also was told abroad even to the Gentiles by a sign from heaven, by the message of a star. For there was a prophecy of Balaam famous in all the eastern country, and recorded by Moses. *\* There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion.* Which although in its first sense it signified David who was the conqueror of the Moabites, yet in its more mysterious and chiefly intended sense, it related to the Son of David; and in expectation of the event of this prophecy, <sup>b</sup> the Arabians the sons of

<sup>a</sup> Numb. 17. 74.

<sup>b</sup> Epiphani: in expos. fid. chth: c. 8.

Abraham by Chetturah, whose portion given by their patriarch was gold, frankincense, and myrrh, who were great lovers of astronomy, did with diligence expect the revelation of a mighty prince in Judea at such time when a miraculous and extraordinary star should appear, *And therefore when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, there came wise men, inspired by God, taught by art, and persuaded by prophecy, from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.* The Greeks suppose this which was called a star, to have been indeed an angel in a pillar of fire and the semblance of a star; and it is made the more likely by coming and standing directly over the humble roof of his nativity, which is not discernible in the station of a star though it be supposed to be lower than the orb of the moon. To which if we add, that they only saw it (so far as we know;) and that it appeared as it were by voluntary periods, it will not be very improbable but that it might be like the angel that went before the sons of Israel in a pillar of fire by night, or rather like the little shining stars sitting upon the bodies of Probus, Tharacus, and Andronicus martyrs, when their bodies were searched for, in the days of Dioclecian, and pointed at by those bright angels.

This star did not trouble Herod, till the Levantine princes expounded the mysteriousness of it, and said it declared a King to be born in Jury, and that the star was his, not applicable to any signification but of a King's birth. <sup>a</sup> And therefore although it was no <sup>b</sup> prodigy nor comet, foretelling diseases, plagues, war and death, but only the happy birth of a most excellent prince, yet it brought affrightment to Herod and all Jerusalem: *for when Herod the King had heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem*

<sup>a</sup> Et terris mutantem regna cometem.

<sup>b</sup> Chalcidius in Timæum Platonis.

*with him.* And thinking that the question of the kingdom was now in dispute, and an heir sent from heaven to lay challenge to it, who brought a star and the learning of the east with him for evidence and probation of his title, Herod thought there was no security to his usurped possession, unless he could rescind the decrees of heaven, and reverse the results and eternal counsels of predestination. And he was resolved to venture it, first by craft, and then by violence.

And *first he calls the chief priests and scribes of the people together*, and demanded of them where Christ should be born; and found by their joint determination that Bethlehem of Judea was the place designed by ancient prophecy and God's decree. Next he enquired of the wise men concerning the star, but privily, what time it appeared. <sup>a</sup> For the star had not motion certain and regular, by the laws of nature, but it so guided the wise men in their journey, that it stood when they stood, moved not when they rested, and went forward when they were able, making no more haste than they did, who carried much of the business and employment of the star along with them. But when Herod was satisfied in his questions, he sent them to Bethlehem with instructions *to search diligently for the young child, and to bring him word*, pretending that he would come and worship him also.

The wise men prosecuted the business of their journey, *and having heard the King, they departed, and the star* (which as it seems attended their motion) *went before them until it came and stood over where the young child was*; where *when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.* Such a joy as is usual to wearied travellers, when they are entering into their inn; such a joy as when our hopes and greatest longings are laying hold upon the proper objects of their desires, a joy of certainty immediately,

<sup>a</sup> Leo Serm. 4. de Epiphan.

before the possession: for that is the greatest joy which possesses before it is satisfied, and rejoices with a joy not abated by the surfeits of possession, but heightened with all the apprehensions and fancies of hope, and the neighbourhood of fruition; a joy of nature, of wonder and of religion. And now their hearts laboured with a throng of spirits and passions, and ran into the house to the embracement of Jesus, even before their feet: *but when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother.* And possibly their expectation was something lessened, and their wonder heightened, when they saw their hope empty of pomp and gaiety, the great King's throne to be a manger, a stable to be his chamber of presence, a thin court, and no ministers, and the King himself a pretty babe, and, but that he had a star over his head, nothing to distinguish him from the common condition of children, or to excuse him from the miseries of a poor and empty fortune.

This did not scandalize those wise persons, but, being convinced by that testimony from heaven, and the union of all circumstances, *they fell down and worshipped him*, after the manner of the easterlings when they do veneration to their Kings, not with an empty *ave* and gay blessing of fine words, but *they bring presents, and come into his courts; for when they had opened their treasures they presented unto him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*<sup>a</sup> And if these gifts were mysterious beyond the acknowledgment of him to be the King of the Jews, and Christ that should come into the world, frankincense might signify him to be acknowledged a God, myrrh to be a man, and gold to be a King. Unless we chuse by gold to signify the acts of mercy; by myrrh, the chastity of minds and purity of our bodies, to the incorruption of which myrrh is especially instrumental; and by in-

<sup>a</sup> S. Ambros. in 2. Lu. 6. Leo. ser. de Epi. Theophil. in 2 Mat. S. Bernard. in serm. 2. de epi. h. Philip. 4. 18. Psal. 141. 2. Revel. 5. 6.

cense we intend our prayers as the most apt presents and oblations to the honour and service of this young King. But however the fancies of religion may represent varieties of ideas, the act of adoration was direct and religious, and the myrrh was medicinal to his tender body ; the incense possibly no more than was necessary in a stable, the first throne of his humility ; and the gold was a good antidote against the present indigencies of his poverty ; presents such as were used in all the Levant, (especially Arabia and Saba, to which the growth of myrrh and frankincense were proper,) in their addresses to their God and to their King, and were instruments with which under the vail of flesh they worshipped the eternal word ; the wisdom of God under infant innocency ; the Almighty power in so great a weakness, and under the lowness of human nature, the altitude of Majesty and the infinity of divine glory. And so was verified the prediction of the prophet Esay under the type of the son of the prophetess, *“ Before a child shall have knowledge to cry, My father and my mother, he shall take the spoil of Damascus and Samaria, from before the King of Assyria.*

When they had paid the tribute of their offerings and adoration, *Being warned in their sleep by an angel not to return to Herod, they returned into their own country another way*, where having been satisfied with the pleasures of religion, and taught by that rare demonstration which was made by Christ, how man’s happiness did nothing at all consist in the affluence of worldly possessions, or the tumours of honour ; having seen the eternal Son of God poor and weak, and unclothed of all exterior ornaments, they renounced the world, and retired empty into the recesses of religion, and the delights of philosophy.

<sup>a</sup> Esa. 8. 4. Justin. M. Dial. cum Tryphon. Tertul. l. 3. contr. Marcion. c. 13.

*Ad.* SECT. IV.*Considerations upon the apparition of the angels to the shepherds.*

WHEN the angels saw that come to pass which Gabriel the great ambassador of God had declared, that which had been prayed for and expected four thousand years, and that by the merits of this newborn prince, their younger brethren and inferiors in the order of intelligent creatures were now to be redeemed, that men should partake the glories of their secret habitations, and should fill up those void places which the fall of Lucifer and the third part of the stars had made, their joy was great as their understanding, and these mountains did leap with joy, because the vallies were filled with benediction and a fruitful shower from heaven. And if at the conversion of one sinner there is jubilation and a festival kept among the angels, how great shall we imagine this rejoicing to be, when salvation and redemption was sent to all the world? But we also to whom the joy did more personally relate (for they rejoiced for our sakes) should learn to estimate the grace done us, and believe there is something very extraordinary in the piety and salvation of a man, when the angels, who in respect of us are unconcerned in the communications, rejoice with the joy of conquerors, or persons suddenly ransomed from tortures and death.

But the angels also had other motions; for besides the pleasures of that joy which they had in beholding human nature so highly exalted, and that God was man, and man was God; they were transported with admiration at the ineffable counsel of God's predestination, prostrating themselves with adoration and modesty, seeing God so humbled, and man so changed, and so full of charity, that God stooped to the condition of man, and man was inflamed beyond the love

of seraphims, and was made more knowing than cherubims, more established than thrones, more happy than all the orders of angels. The issue of this consideration teaches us to learn their charity, and to exterminate all the intimations and beginnings of envy, that we may as much rejoice at the good of others as of ourselves; for then we love good for God's sake when we love good wherever God hath placed it; and that joy is charitable which overflows our neighbours fields, when ourselves are unconcerned in the personal accruements; for so we are *made partakers of all that fear God*, when charity unites their joy to ours, as it makes us partakers of their common sufferings.

And now the angels, who had adored the holy Jesus in heaven, come also to pay their homage to him upon earth; and laying aside their flaming swords, they take into their hands instruments of music, and sing *Glory be to God on high*. First signifying to us, that the incarnation of the holy Jesus, was a very great instrument of the glorification of God, and those divine perfections in which he is chiefly pleased to communicate himself to us, were in nothing manifested so much as in the mysteriousness of this work. 2. And in vain doth man satisfy himself with complacencies and ambitious designs upon earth, when he sees before him, God in the form of a servant, humble and poor, and crying, and an infant full of need and weakness.

But God hath pleased to reconcile his glory with our eternal benefit, and that also was part of the angel's song, *In earth peace to men of good will*. For now we need not with Adam to fly from the presence of the Lord, saying, *I heard thy voice, and I was afraid and hid myself*; for he, from whom our sins made us once to fly, now weeps, and is an infant in his mother's arms, seeking strange means to be reconciled to us, hath forgotten all his anger and is swallowed up with love, and encircled with irradiations of amorous affections and good will: and the effects of this good will are not referred



only to persons of heroical and eminent graces and operations, of vast and expensive charities, of prodigious abstinencies, of heremital retirements, of ascetical diet, of perfect religion, and canonized persons, but to all men of good will, whose souls are hallowed with holy purposes and pious desires, though the beauties of the religion, and holy thoughts, were not spent in exterior acts, nor called out by the opportunities of a rich and expressive fortune.

But here we know where *the seat and regiment of peace* is placed, and all of it must pass by us and descend upon us as duty and reward. It proceeds from the word incarnate, from the Son of God undertaking to reconcile us to his Father; and it is ministered and consigned unto us by every event and act of providence, whether it be decyphered in characters of paternal indulgence, or of correction, or of absolution: for that is not peace from above, to have all things according to our human and natural wishes; but to be in favour with God, *that is peace*; always remembering, that, to be chastised by him, is not a certain testimony of his mere wrath, but to all his servants a character of love, and of paternal provision, since *he chastises every son whom he receives*. Whosoever seeks to avoid all this world's adversity, can never find peace: but he only who hath resolved all his affections, and placed them in the heart of God, he who denies his own will, and hath killed self love, and all those enemies within that make afflictions to become miseries indeed and full of bitterness, he only enjoys this peace; and in proportion to every man's mortification and self denial, so are the degrees of his peace; and this is the peace which the angel proclaimed at the enunciation of that birth which taught humility and contempt of things below, and all its vainer glories by the greatest argument in the world, even the poverty of God incarnate. And if God sent his *own, natural, only begotten and beloved Son*, in all the dresses of poverty and contempt; that person is vain, who thinks God

will love him better than he loved his own Son, or that he will express his love any other or gentler way than to make him partaker of the fortune of his eldest Son. There is one other postern to the dwellings of peace, and that is, *good will to men*, for so much charity as we have to others, such a measure of peace also we may enjoy at home: for peace was only proclaimed to men of good will, to them that are at peace with God and all the world.

But the angel brought the message to shepherds, to persons simple and mean, and humble; persons likely to be more apprehensive of the mystery and less of the scandal, of the poverty of the Messias: for they whose custom or affections dwell in secular pomps, who are not used by charity or humility to stoop to an evenness and consideration of their brethren, of equal natures though of unequal fortunes; are persons of all the world most indisposed and removed from the understanding of spiritual excellencies, especially when they do not come clothed with advantages of the world, and of such beauties which they admire. God himself in poverty comes in a prejudice to them that love riches, and a simplicity is a folly to crafty persons, a mean birth is an ignoble stain, beggary is a scandal, and the cross an unanswerable objection. But the angels' moral in the circumstance of his address, and inviting the poor shepherds to Bethlehem, is, That none are fit to come to Christ, but those who are poor in spirit, despisers of the world, simple in their hearts, without craft and secular designs; and therefore neither did the angel tell the story to Herod, nor to the Scribes and Pharisees, whose ambition had

\* At nos virtutes ipsas invertimus, atque  
Sincerum cupimus vas incrustare. Probus quis  
Nobiscum vivit: multum dimissus homo, illi  
Tardo cognomen pingui damus——  
Simplicior si quis——ut forte legentem  
Aut tacitum impellat, quovis sermone molestus  
Communi sensu planè caret, inquitur.——

ends contradictory to the simplicity and poverty of the birth of Jesus.

These shepherds when they conversed with angels were watching over their flocks by night ; no revellers ; but in a painful and dangerous employment, the work of an honest calling, securing their folds against incursions of wild beasts, which in those countries are not seldom, or unfrequent. And Christ being the great shepherd (and possibly for the analogy's sake the sooner manifested to shepherds,) hath made his ministers & overseers of their flocks, distinguished in their particular folds, and conveys the mysteriousness of his kingdom first to the pastors, and by their ministry to the flocks ; but although all of them be admitted to the ministry, yet those only to the interior recesses and nearer imitations of Jesus, who are watchful over their flocks, assiduous in their labours, painful in their sufferings, present in the dangers of the sheep, ready to interpose their persons, and sacrifice their lives ; these are shepherds who first converse with angels, and finally shall enter into the presence of the Lord. But besides this symbol, we are taught in the significations of the letter ; that he that is diligent in the business of an honest calling, is then doing service to God, and a work so pleasing to him, who hath appointed the sons of men to labour, that to these shepherds he made a return and recompence by the conversation of an angel ; and hath advanced the reputation of an honest and a mean employment to such a testimony of acceptance, that no honest person, though busied in meaner offices, may ever hereafter in the estimation of Christ's disciples become contemptible.

The signs which the angel gave to discover the babe, were no marks of lustre and vanity, but they should find, 1. a babe ; 2. swaddled ; 3. lying in a manger. The first a testimony of his humility, the second of his poverty, the third of his incommmodity and uneasiness ; for Christ came to combat the whole

body of sin, and to destroy every province of Satan's kingdom. For these are direct antimonies to *the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*. Against the first Christ opposed his hard and uneasy lodging, against the second, the poorness of his swaddling bands and mantle, and the third is combated by the great dignation and descent of Christ from a throne of majesty to the state of a sucking babe. And these are the first lessons he hath taught us for our imitation, which that we may the better do, as we must take him for our pattern, so also for our helper, and pray to the holy child, and he will not only teach us, but also give us power and ability.

#### THE PRAYER.

"O BLESSED and eternal Jesu, at whose birth the quires of angels sang praises to God, and proclaimed peace to men, sanctify my will and inferior affections; make me to be within the conditions of peace, that I be holy and mortified, a despiser of the world and exterior vanities, humble and charitable; that by thy eminent example I may be so fixed in the designs and prosecution of the ends of God, and a blissful eternity, that I be unmoved with the terrors of the world, unaltered with its allurements and seductions, not ambitious of its honour, not desirous of its fullness and plenty; but make me diligent in the employment thou givest me, faithful in discharge of my trust, modest in my desires, content in the issues of thy providence, that in such dispositions I may receive and entertain visitations from heaven, and revelations of the mysteries and blisses evangelical; that by such directions I may be brought into thy presence, there to see thy beauties and admire thy graces, and imitate all thy inimitable excellencies, and rest in thee for ever, in this world by the perseverance of a holy and conformable life, and in the world to come in the participation of thy essential glories and felicities, O blessed and eternal Jesus. Amen.

## Ad. SECT. IV.

*Considerations of the Epiphany of the blessed Jesus by a Star, and the adoration of Jesus by the Eastern Magi.*

GOD, who is the universal Father of all men, at the nativity of the Messias gave notice of it to all the world, as they were represented by the grand division of Jews and Gentiles. To the Jewish shepherds by an angel, to the eastern Magi by a star. For the gospel is of universal dissemination, not confined within the limits of a national prerogative, but catholic and diffused. As God's love was, so was the dispensation of it, without respect of persons: for all being included under the curse of sin, were to him equal and indifferent, undistinguishable objects of mercy. And Jesus descended of the Jews, was also the expectation of the Gentiles, and therefore communicated to all: The grace of God being like the air we breathe, and *it hath appeared to all men*, saith St. Paul; but the conveyances and communications of it were different in the degrees of clarity and illustration. The angel told the shepherds the story of the nativity plainly and literally: The star invited the wise men by its rareness and preternatural apparition; to which also, as by a foot-path, they had been led by the prophecy of Balaam.

But here first the grace of God prevents us; without him we can do nothing, he lays the first stone in every spiritual building; and then expects by that strength he first gave us, that we make the superstructures. But as a stone thrown into a river, first moves the water, and disturbs its surface into a circle, and then its own force wafts the neighbouring drops into a larger figure by its proper weight: so is the grace of God, the first principle of our spiritual mo-

<sup>a</sup> Tit. 2. 11.

tion, and when it moves us into its own figure, and hath actuated and ennobled our natural powers by the influence of that first incentive, we continue the motion and enlarge the progress. But as the circle on the face of the waters, grows weaker till it hath smoothed itself into a natural and even current, unless the force be renewed or continued: so does all our natural endeavour, when first set a-work by God's preventing grace, decline to the imperfection of its own kind, unless the same force be made energetical and operative by the continuation and renewing of the same supernatural influence.

And therefore the eastern Magi, being first raised up into wonder and curiosity, by the apparition of the star, were very far from finding Jesus by such general and indefinite significations: but then the goodness of God's grace increased its own influence; for an inspiration from the spirit of God admonished them to observe the star, shewed the star that they might find it, taught them to acknowledge it, \*instructed them to understand its purpose, and invited them to follow it; and never left them till they had found the holy Jesus. Thus also God deals with us. He gives us the first grace, and adds the second, he enlightens our understandings, and actuates our faculties, and sweetly allures us by the proposition of rewards, and wounds us with the arrows of his love, and inflames us with fire from heaven; ever giving us new assistances, or increasing the old, refreshing us with comforts, or arming us with patience; sometimes stirring our affections by the lights held out to our understanding, sometimes bringing confirmation to our understanding by the motion of our affections, till by variety of means we at last arrive at Bethlehem, in the service and entertainments of the holy Jesus. Which we shall certainly do, if we follow the invitations of grace and exterior assistances which are given us to instruct us, to help us, and to invite us, but not to force our endeavours and co-operations.

\* Dedit intellectum qui prastitit signum. *S. Leo ser 1. Epiph.*

As it was an unsearchable wisdom, so it was an unmeasurable grace of providence and dispensation which God did exhibit to the wise men, to them, as to all men, disposing the ministries of his grace sweetly, and by the proportion to the capacities of the person suscipient. For God called the Gentiles by such means which their customs and learning had made prompt and easy. For these Magi were great philosophers and astronomers, and therefore God sent a miraculous star to invite and lead them to a new and more glorious light; the lights of grace and glory. And God so blessed them in following the star, to which their innocent curiosity and national customs were apt to lead them; that their custom was changed to grace, and their learning heightened with inspiration, and God crowned all with a spiritual and glorious event. It was not much unlike, which<sup>a</sup> God did to the princes and diviners among the Philistines, who sent the ark back with five golden emeroids and five golden mice; an act proportionable to the custom and sense of their nation and religion: yet God accepted their opinion and divination to the utmost end they designed it, and took the plagues of emeroids and mice from them. For oftentimes the custom or the philosophy of the opinions of a nation are made instrumental, through God's acceptance, to ends higher than they can produce by their own energy and intendment. And thus the astrological divinations of the Magi were turned into the order of a greater design than the whole art could promise, their employment being altered into grace, and nature into a miracle. But then when the wise men were brought by this means, and had seen Jesus, then God takes ways more immediate and proportionable to the kingdom of grace: the next time God speaks to them by an angel. For so is God's usual manner to bring us to him; first, by ways agreeable to us, and then to

<sup>a</sup> 1 Sam. 6.

increase by ways agreeable to himself. And when he hath furnished us with new capacities, he gives new lights in order to more perfect employments: and *To him that hath, shall be given full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over*; the eternal kindness of God being like the sea, which delights to run in its old channel, and to fill the hollownesses of the earth which itself hath made and hath once watered.

This star, which conducted the wise men to Bethlehem, (if at least it was properly a star, and not an angel) was set in its place to be seen by all; but was not observed, or not understood, nor its message obeyed by any but the three wise men. And indeed no man hath cause to complain of God, as if ever he would be deficient in assistances necessary to his service, but first the grace of God separates us from the common condition of incapacity and indisposition, and then we separate ourselves one from another by the use or neglect of this grace: and God doing his part to us, hath cause to complain of us, who neglect that which is our portion of the work. And however even the issues and the kindnesses of God's predestination and antecedent mercy, does very much toward the making the grace to be effective of its purpose, yet the manner of all those influences and operations being moral, persuasive, reasonable, and divisible; and by concurrence of various circumstances, the cause and the effect are brought nearer and nearer in various susceptibles; but not brought so close together, but that God expects us to do <sup>a</sup> something towards it; so that we may say with Saint Paul, *It is not I, but the grace of God that is with me*; and at the same time, when by reason of our co-operation we actuate and improve God's grace, and become distinguished from other persons, more negligent un-

<sup>a</sup> ἅλλ' ἔργον Θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ διὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ συνήπιτα. Ἡ; τοῖς Θεοῖς πλὴν Θεοῦ ὅτι ἐν ὁφθαλμοῖς.  
Æschyl. Persis.



der the same opportunities, God is he, who also does distinguish us by the proportions and circumscribe applications of his grace to every singular capacity; that we may be careful not to neglect the grace, and yet to return the entire glory to <sup>a</sup> God.

Although God, to second the generous design of these wise personages in the enquiry of the new princē, made the star to guide them through the difficulties of their journey, yet when they came to Jerusalem, the star disappeared; God so resolving to try their faith, and the activity of their desires; to demonstrate to them that God is the Lord of all his creatures, and a voluntary dispenser of his own favours, and can as well take them away as indulge them, and to engage them upon the use of ordinary means and ministeries when they are to be had; for now the extraordinary and miraculous guide for a time did cease; that they being at Jerusalem might enquire of them, whose office and profession of sacred mysteries did oblige them to publish the Messias. <sup>b</sup> For God, is so great a lover of order, so regular and certain an exactor of us to use those ordinary ministeries of his own appointing, that he having used the extraordinary, but as architects do frames of wood, to support the arches till they be built, takes them away when the work is ready, and leaves us to those other of his designation; and hath given such efficacy to these, that they are as persuasive and operative as a miracle; and S. Paul's sermon would convert as many, as if Moses should rise from the grave. And now the doctrines of Christianity have not only the same truth, but the same evidence and virtue also they had in the midst of those prime demonstrations extraordinary by miracle and prophecy, if men were equally disposed.

<sup>a</sup> Θεὸς δὲ δῶρόν ἐστιν εὐτυχεῖν θρόνου. *Æschyl.* ἐπὶ ἐπὶ Θη. <sup>b</sup> Τὸτο γὰρ ἐστὶν αὐτὴ καὶ τὸ εἶναι σοφία, τὸ ἐν τάξει καὶ τελειότητι προάγειν τὴν ποίησιν, ὥς ἐ συνεισίδεσθαι ἀλλήλαις σοφίαν, καὶ τάξιν, καὶ τελειότητα. *Hierocl.*

When they were come to the doctors of the Jews they asked confidently, and with great openness, under the ear and eye of a tyrant prince, bloody and timorous, jealous and ambitious, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* And so gave evidence of their faith; of their magnanimity and fearless confidence and profession of it, and of their love of the mystery and object, in pursuance of which they had taken so troublesome and vexatious journeys; and besides that they upbraided the tepidity and infidel baseness of the Jewish nation, who stood unmoved and unconcerned by all the circumstances of wonder, and stirred not one step to make enquiry after, or to visit the new-born King. They also teach us to be open and confident in our religion and faith, and not to consider our temporal, when they once come to contest against our religious interests.

The doctors of the Jews told the wise men where Christ was to be born, the Magi they address themselves with haste to see him, and to worship, and the doctors themselves stir not; God not only serving himself with truth out of the mouths of impious persons, but magnifying the recesses of his counsel, and wisdom, and predestination, who uses the same doctrine to glorify himself and to confound his enemies, to save the scholars, and to condemn the tutors, to instruct one, and upbraid the other; making it an instrument of faith and a conviction of infidelity; the sermons of the doctors in such cases being like the spoils of beavers, sheep, and silk worms, designed to clothe others, and are made the occasions of their own nakedness, and the causes of their death. But as it is a demonstration of the divine wisdom, so it is of human folly; there being no greater imprudence in the world than to do others advantage, and to neglect your own. *If thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee:* But if thou beest like a channel in a garden through which the water runs, to cool and

moisten the herbs, but nothing for its own use; \* thou buildest a fortune to them upon the ruins of thine own house, while *after thy preaching to others, thou thyself dost become a castaway.*

When the wise men departed from Jerusalem the star again appeared, and they rejoiced with exceeding great joy; and indeed to new converts and persons in their first addresses to the worship of God, such spiritual and exterior comforts are often indulged; because then God judges them to be most necessary, as being invitations to duty by the entertainments of our affections with such sweetnesss, which represent the glory of the reward by the antepasts and refreshments dispensed even in the ruggedness of the way and incommodities of the journey. All other delights are the pleasures of beasts or the sports of children; these are the antepasts and preventions of the full feasts and overflowings of eternity.

When they came to Bethlehem, and the star pointed them to a stable, they entered in, and being enlightened with a divine ray proceeding from the face of the holy child, and seeing through the cloud, and passing through the scandal of his mean lodging, and poor condition, they bowed themselves to the earth; first giving themselves an oblation to this great King; then they made offering of their gifts; for a man's person is first accepted, then his gift; God first regarded Abel, and then accepted his offering: which we are best taught to understand by the present instance; for it means no more, but that all outward services and oblations are made acceptable by the prior presentation of an inward sacrifice. If we have first presented ourselves, then our gift is pleasant, as coming but to express the truth of the first sacrifice; but if our persons be not first made a holocaust to God; the lesser oblations of outward presents

\* Piaga mortale che si non puo guarire, [Vivere in altrui et in se stesso amare.

are like sacrifices without salt and fire, nothing to make them pleasant or religious. For all other senses of this proposition charge upon God the distinguishing and acceptation of persons, against which he solemnly protests. God regards no man's person, but according to the doing of his duty; but then God is first to accept the person, and then the gift, when the person is first sanctified and given to God by the vows and habits of a holy life, and then all the actions of his religion are homogeneous to their principle, and accepted by the acceptation of the man.

These Magi presented to the holy babe gold, frankincense, and myrrh, protesting their faith of three articles by the symbolical oblation: by gold, that he was a king; by incense, that he was a God; by myrrh, that he was a man. And the presents also were representative of interior virtues; the myrrh signifying faith, mortification, chastity, compunction, and all the actions of the purgative way of spiritual life; the incense signifying hope, prayer, obedience, good intention, and all the actions and devotions of the illuminative; the giving the gold, representing love to God and our neighbours, the contempt of riches, poverty of spirit, and all the eminencies and spiritual riches of the unitive life; and these oblations if we present to the holy Jesus, both our persons and our gifts shall be accepted, our sins shall be purged, our understandings enlightened, and our wills united to this holy child, and entitled to a communion of all his glories.

And thus in one view and two instances, God hath drawn all the world to himself by his son Jesus; <sup>a</sup> in

<sup>a</sup> Nam simul terris, animisque duri  
Et sua Bessi nive duriores  
Nunc oves facti, duce te, gregantur  
Pacis in aulam.

Nox ubi quondam fuerat ferarum,  
Nunc ibi ritus viget Angelorum  
Et latet Justus, quibus ipse latro  
Vixit in antris.

*S. Paulinus id reditu Nicetæ.*

the instance of the shepherds and the Arabian Magi, Jews, and Gentiles, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, noble and ignoble; that in him all nations, and all conditions, and all families, and all persons might be blessed, having called all by one star or other, by natural reason, or by the secrets of philosophy, by the revelations of the gospel, or by the ministry of angels, by the illuminations of the spirit, or by sermons, and dictates of spiritual fathers; and hath consigned this lesson to us, That we must never appear before the Lord empty; offering gifts to him by the expences, or by the affections of charity, either the worshipping, or the oblations of religion, either the riches of the world, or the love of the soul; for if we cannot bring gold with the rich Arabians, we may with the poor shepherds come and kiss the Son lest he be angry, and in all cases come and serve him with fear and reverence, and spiritual rejoicings.

### THE PRAYER.

Most holy Jesu, thou art the glory of thy people Israel, and a light to the Gentiles, and wert pleased to call the Gentiles to the adoration and knowledge of thy sacred person and laws, communicating the inestimable riches of thy holy discipline to all, with an universal undistinguishing love; give unto us spirits docible, pious, prudent, and ductile, that no motion or invitation of grace be ineffectual, but may produce excellent effects upon us, and the secret whispers of thy spirit may prevail upon our affections in order to piety and obedience, as certainly as the loudest and most clamorous sermons of the gospel. Create in us such excellencies as are fit to be presented to thy glorious Majesty; accept of the oblation of myself, and my entire services; but be thou pleased to verify my offering, and secure the possession to thyself, that the enemy may not pollute the sacrifice, or divide the gift, or question the title; but that I may be wholly

thine, and for ever; clarify my understanding, sanctify my will, replenish my memory with arguments of piety, then shall I present to thee an oblation rich and precious as the treble gift of the Levantine Princes. Lord I am thine, reject me not from thy favour, exclude me not from thy presence, then shall I serve thee all the days of my life, and partake of the glories of thy kingdom in which thou reignest gloriously and eternally. . Amen.



## SECT. V.

### *Of the Circumcision of Jesus, and his presentation in the Temple.*

AND now the blessed Saviour of the world began to do the work of his mission, and our redemption; and because man had prevaricated all the divine commandments, to which all human nature respectively to the persons of several capacities was obliged, and therefore the whole nature was obnoxious to the just rewards of its demerits. First Christ was to put that nature he had assumed into a saveable condition by fulfilling his Father's preceptive will, and then to reconcile it actually by suffering the just deservings of its prevarications. He therefore addresses himself to all the parts of an active obedience, *and when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child*, he exposed his tender body to the sharpness of the circumcising stone, and shed his blood in drops, giving an earnest of those rivers which he did afterwards pour out for the cleansing all human nature, and extinguishing the wrath of God.

He that had no sin, nor was conceived by natural generation, could have no adherencies to his soul or body which needed to be pared away by a rite, and cleansed by a mystery; neither indeed do we find it

expressed that circumcision was ordained for abolition or pardon of original sin, (it is indeed presumed so<sup>a</sup>); but it was instituted to be a seal of a covenant between God and Abraham, and Abraham's posterity, *A seal of the righteousness of faith*, and therefore was not improper for him to suffer, who was the child of Abraham, and who was the Prince of the Covenant, and *the author and finisher of that faith*, which was consigned to Abraham in circumcision. But so mysterious were all the actions of Jesus, that this one served many ends. For, 1. It gave demonstration of the verity of human nature. 2. So he began to fulfil the law. 3. And took from himself the scandal of uncircumcision, which would eternally have prejudiced the Jews against his entertainment and communion. 4. And then he took upon him that name which declared him to be the Saviour of the world, which as it was consummate in the blood of the cross, so was it inaugurated in the blood of circumcision, *For when the eight days were accomplished for circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus.*

But this holy family who had laid up their joys in the eyes and heart of God, longed till they might be permitted an address to the Temple, that there they might present the holy babe unto his father; and indeed that he, who had no other, might be brought to his own house: for although, while he was a child, he did differ nothing from a servant, yet he was the lord of the place, *It was his Father's house, and he was the lord of all, and therefore when the days of the purification were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord; to whom he was holy as being the first born; the first born of his mother, the only begotten son of his father, and the first born of every creature.* And they did with him

<sup>a</sup> "Ὁς ποθ' ἔης πάθης ἐξήγαγε δ' ὄν Ἀβραάμ, αὐτὸς ἀπ' ὑπνόνθεν κέλετ' ἀνέρα παντὶ σὺν ὅκῳ Σάρκ' ἀποσυλῆσαι πόθης ἀπὸ, ὃ ῥ' ἐτέλεισεν. Euseb. l. 9 c. 22. πρῶτον. Evangel.,

according to the law of Moses, offering a pair of turtle doves for his redemption.

But there was no public act about this holy child, but it was attended by something miraculous and extraordinary. And at this instant the Spirit of God directed a holy person into the Temple, that he might feel the fulfilling of a prophecy made to himself, that he might before his *death behold the Lord's Christ*, and embrace *the glory and consolation of Israel*, and *the light of the Gentiles* in his arm; for old Simeon came by the Spirit into the Temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, then took he him up in his arms and blessed God, and prophesied, and spake glorious things of *that child*, and things sad and glorious concerning his mother; that the *child was set for the rising and falling of many in Israel*, for a sign that should be spoken against; and the bitterness of that contradiction should pierce the heart of the holy Virgin mother like a sword, that her joy at the present accidents might be attempered with present revelation of her future trouble, and the excellent favour of being the Mother of God might be crowned with the reward of martyrdom and a mother's love be raised up to an excellency great enough to make her suffer the bitterness of being transfix'd with his love and sorrow as with a sword.

But old Anna the prophetess came also in, full of years and joy, and found the reward of her long prayers and fasting in the Temple; the long looked for redemption of Israel was now in the Temple, and she saw with her eyes the light of the world, the heir of heaven, the long looked for Messiah, whom the nations had desired and expected till their hearts were faint, and their eyes dim with looking further and apprehending greater distances. She also prophesied and gave thanks unto the Lord. But Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.



*Ad. SECT. V.**Considerations upon the Circumcision of the holy child Jesus.*

WHEN eight days were come, the holy Jesus was circumcised, and shed the first fruits of his blood, offering them to God like the prælibation of a sacrifice, and earnest of the great seas of effusion designed for his passion, not for the expiation of any stain himself had contracted; for he was spotless as the face of the sun, and had contracted no wrinkle from the aged and polluted brow of Adam: but it was an act of obedience, and yet of choice and voluntary susception, to which no obligation had passed upon him in the condition of his own person. For as he was included in the verge of Abraham's posterity, and had put on the common outside of his nation, his parents had intimation enough to pass upon him the sacrament of the national covenant, and it became an act of excellent obedience; but because he was a person extraordinary, and exempt from the reasons of circumcision, and himself in person was to give period to the rite, therefore it was an act of choice in him, and in both the capacities becomes a precedent of duty to us, in the first of obedience, in the second of humility.

But it is considerable, that the holy Jesus, who might have pleaded his exemption, especially in a matter of pain and dishonour, yet chose that way which was more severe and regular, so teaching us to be strict in our duties, and sparing in the rights of privilege and dispensation; we pretend every indisposition of body to excuse us from penal duties, from fasting, from going to church; and instantly we satisfy ourselves with saying, God will have mercy and not sacrifice; so making ourselves judges of our own privileges, in which commonly we are parties against God, and

therefore likely to pass unequal sentence. It is not an easy argument that will bring us to the severities and rigours of duty, but we snatch at occasions of dispensation, and therefore possibly may mistake the justice of the opportunities by the importunities of our desires. However, if this too much easiness be in any case excusable from sin; yet in all cases it is an argument of infirmity, and the regular observation of the commandment is the surer way to perfection. For not every inconvenience of body is fit to be pleaded against the inconvenience of losing spiritual advantage, but only such which upon prudent account does intrench upon the laws of charity; or such whose consequent is likely to be impediment of a duty in a greater degree of loss than the present omission. For the spirit being in many perfections more eminent than the body, all spiritual improvements have the same proportions; so that if we were just estimators of things, it ought not to be less than a great incommodity to the body, which we mean to prevent by the loss of a spiritual benefit, or the omission of a duty; he were very improvident, who would lose a finger for the good husbandry of saving a ducat; and it would be an unhandsome excuse from the duties of repentance to pretend care of the body. The proportions and degrees of this are so nice and of so difficult determination, that men are more apt to untie the girdle of discipline with the loose hands of dispensation and excuse, than to strain her too hard by the strictures and bindings of severity, but the error were the surer on this side.

The blessed Jesus refused not the signature of this bloody covenant, though it were the character of a sinner, and did sacramentally rescind the impure reliques of Adam, and the contractions of evil customs; which was the greatest descent of humility that is imaginable, that he should put himself to pain to be reckoned amongst sinners, and to have their sacraments and their protestations, though his innocence

was purer than the flames of Cherubim. But we use arts to seem more righteous than we are, desiring rather to be *accounted* holy, than to *be*; as thinking the vanity of reputation more useful to us, than the happiness of a remote and far distant eternity. But if (as it is said) circumcision was ordained, besides the signing of the covenant, to abolish the guilt of original sin, we are willing to confess that, it being no act of humiliation to confess a crime that all the world is equally guilty of, that could not be avoided by our timeliest industry, and that serves us for so many ends in the excuse and minoration of our actual impieties; so that as Diogenes trampled upon Plato's pride with a greater fastuousness, and humourous ostentation: so we do with original sin, declaim against it bitterly to save the others harmless, and are free in the publication of this, that we may be instructed how to conceal the actual. The blessed Jesus had in him no principle of sin, original nor actual, and therefore this designation of his, in submitting himself to the bloody covenant of circumcision, which was a just express and sacramental abscission of it, was an act of glorious humility: yet our charging of ourselves so promptly with Adam's fault, what ever truth it may have in the strictness of theology, hath put an ill end in morality; and so I now consider it without any reflexion upon the precise question.

For though the fall of Adam lost to him all those supernatural assistances which God put into our nature by the way of grace, yet it is by accident that we are more prone to many sins than we are to virtue; Adam's sin did discompose his understanding and affections; and every sin we do, does still make us more unreasonable, more violent, more sensual, more apt still to the multiplication of the same or the like actions; the first rebellion of the inferior faculties against the will and understanding, and every victory the flesh gets over the spirit, makes the inferior insolent, strong, tumultuous, domineering and triumphant,

upon the proportionable ruins of the spirit, blinding our reason and binding our will; and all these violations of our powers are increased by the perpetual ill customs and false principles and ridiculous guises of the world; which makes the latter ages to be worse than the <sup>a</sup> former, unless some other accident do intervene to stop the ruin and declension of virtue, such as are God's judgments, the sending of prophets, new imposition of laws, messages from heaven, diviner institutions, such as in particular was the great discipline of christianity. And even in this sense here is origination enough for sin, and impairing of the reasonable faculties of human souls, without charging our faults upon Adam.

But besides this, God who hath propounded to man glorious conditions, and designed him to an excellent state of immortality, hath required of him such a duty as shall put man to labour, and present to God a service of a free and difficult obedience. For therefore God hath given us laws, which come cross and are restraints to our natural inclinations, that we may part with something in the service of God, which we value. For although this is nothing in respect of God, yet to man it is the greatest he can do. What thanks were it to man to obey God in such things which he would do though he were not commanded. But to leave all our own desires, and to take up objects of God's propounding contrary to our own, and desires against our nature, this is that which God designed as a sacrifice of ourselves to him. And therefore God hath made many of his laws to be prohibitions in the matter of natural pleasure, and restraints of our sensitive appetite. <sup>b</sup> Now this being become the matter of divine laws, that we should in many parts and degrees abstain from what pleases our senses, by this supervening accident it happens that we are very hardly weaned from sin,

<sup>a</sup> Τὸς παλαιὰς δὲ ἡ ἑλληνικὴ θύον γεγονότας εὐδαίμονας τε ὅλας φύσει καὶ τὸν ἄριστον ἐξ ηὐχέας βίον, ὡς χρυσὸν γενέσθαι. *Porphyr. l. 4. de non esu animalium.*

<sup>b</sup> Τοῦτο δὲ μὲν ἐν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσι ἐκαστομαρτυρεῖται, ἔρχεται μὴ παραβλεῖν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς [αὐτοῖς] ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. *Illicrocl.*

but most easily tempted to a vice. And then we think we have reason to lay the fault upon original sin and natural aversion from goodness, when this inclination to vice is but accidental, and occasional upon the matter and sanction of the laws. Our nature is not contrary to virtue, for the laws of nature and right reason do not only oblige us, but incline us to it; but the instances of some virtues are made to come cross our nature, that is, to our natural appetites, by reason of which it comes to pass, that (as St. Paul<sup>a</sup> says) *we are by nature the children of wrath*, meaning that by our natural inclinations we are disposed to contradict those laws which lay fetters upon them, we are apt to satisfy *the lusts of the flesh*, for in these he there instances.

But in things intellectual and spiritual, where neither the one nor the other satisfy the sensual part, we are indifferent to virtue or to vice, and when we do amiss it is wholly, and in all degrees inexcusably our own fault. In the old law, when it was a duty to swear by the God of Israel in solemn causes, men were apt enough to swear by him only, and that some times the Israelites did swear by the Queen of heaven, it was by the ill example and desires to comply with the neighbour nations, whose daughters they sometimes married, or whose arms they feared, or whose friendship they desired, or with whom they did negotiate. It is indifferent to us to love our fathers, and to love strangers, according as we are determined by custom or education. Nay for so much of it as is natural and original, we are more inclined to love them than to disrepute them; and if we disobey them it is when any injunction of theirs comes cross to our natural desires and purposes. But if from our infancy we be told concerning a stranger that he is our father, we frame our affections to nature, and our nature to custom and education, and are as apt to love him

<sup>a</sup> Ephes. 2, 3.

who is not, and yet is said to be, as him, who is said not to be, and yet indeed is our natural father.

And in sensual things, if God had commanded polygamy or promiscuous concubinage, or unlimited eatings and drinkings, it is not to be supposed, but that we should have been ready enough to have obeyed God in all such impositions. And the sons of Israel never murmured, when God bad them borrow jewels and ear rings, and spoil the Egyptians. But because God restrained these desires, our duties are the harder, because they are fetters to our liberty, and contradictions to those natural inclinations, which also are made more active by evil custom and unhandsome educations. From which premises we shall observe in order to practise, that sin creeps upon us in our education <sup>a</sup> so tacitly and undiscernably, that we mistake the cause of it, and yet so prevalently and effectually, that we judge it to be our very nature, and charge it upon Adam, to lessen the imputation upon us, or to encrease the license or the confidence, when every one of us is the Adam, the man of sin, and the parent of our own impurities. For it is notorious that our own iniquities do so discompose our naturals, and evil customs and examples do so encourage impiety, and the law of God enjoins such virtues which do violence to nature, that our proclivity to sin is occasioned by the accident, and is caused by ourselves; <sup>b</sup> whatever mischief Adam did

<sup>a</sup> Non enim nos tarditatis natura damnavit, sed ultra nobis quod oportebat indulsimus: ita non tam ingenio nos illi superarunt quam proposito. *Quintil. Orat. 1.*

Ξυοκράτης φησιν, ἰσχυρίζεσθαι ἵνα τὸν τὴν ψυχὴν ἔχοντα σπυδαίαν, ταύτην γὰρ ἐκείνῳ ἵνα αἰμῶνα. *Arist. 2. Top. c. 3.*

Ἡράκλειτος ἔφη, ὡς ἔσθ' ἀνθρώπῳ δαίμων. *Stob. Serm. 250.*

Denique te ipsem

Concite, numque tibi vitiorum in severit olim

Natura, aut etiam consuetudo mala: namque

Neglectis urenda filix inasoitur agris. *Horat. Sat.*

Ante palatum corum quam os instituimus. Gaudemus si quid licentius dixerint. Verbane Alexandrinis quidem permittenda deliciis, risu & osculo excipimus. Fit ex his consuetudo, deinde natura. Discunt hæc miseri, antequam sciunt vitia esse. *Quintil. l. 1. c. 2.*

Tanta est corruptela malæ consuetudinis ut ab ea tanquam igniculi extinguantur à natura dati, exorianturq; & conflantur contraria vitia. *Cicero.*

to us we do more to ourselves. We are taught to be revengeful in our cradles, and are taught to strike our neighbour as a means to still our frowardness, and to satisfy our wranglings. Our nurses teach us to know the greatness of our birth, or the riches of our inheritance, or they learn us to be proud, or to be impatient, before they learn us to know God, or to say our prayers. And then because the use of reason comes at no definite time, but insensibly and divisibly we are permitted such acts with impunity too long, deferring to repute them to be sins, till the habit is grown strong, natural, and masculine; and because from the infancy it began in inclinations, and tender overtures and slighter actions, Adam is laid in the fault, and *original sin did all*; and this clearly we therefore confess, \* that our faults may seem the less, and the misery be pretended natural, that it may be thought to be irremediable; and therefore we not engaged to endeavour a cure; so that the confession of our original sin, is no imitation of Christ's humility in suffering circumcision; but too often an act of pride, carelessness, ignorance, and security.

At the circumcision his parents imposed the holy name told to the virgin by the angel, his name was called Jesus, *a name above every name*. For in old times God was known by names of power, of nature, of majesty; but his name of mercy was reserved till now, when God did purpose to pour out the whole treasure of his mercy by the mediation and ministry of his holy Son.<sup>b</sup> And because God gave to the holy babe the name in which the treasures of mercy were de-

\* Εἰδῶσαι γὰρ οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὅτι ὅπως ἔπαινεῖν ἢ τιμᾶν τὸς ἐκ τῶν πατέρων τῶν ἐνδοκίμητων γεγονότας, ὡς τὸς ἐκ τῶν δυσκόλων ἢ χαλεπῶν, ἤνπερ φαίνεται μηδὲν ἰσμοῖσι τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὄντες. *Isocrates ep. Timoth.*

<sup>b</sup> Nomen enim Jesu Hebraicè prolatum nihil aliud est n<sup>o</sup> catum per schin. Videat, cui animus est, multa de myst<sup>o</sup> Galatinum. Ad eundem sensum fuit vaticinium Sibyllæ: vo-  
nom..... puā

Δὲ τότε γὰρ μέγαλοιο Θεῷ τοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν  
ἤξει σαρκόφορος θνητοῖς ὁμοιόμενος ἐν γῇ  
Τέσσαρα φωνήεντα φέρων, τὸ δ' ἀφώνον ἐν αὐτῷ.

posited, and exalted this name above all names, we are taught that the purpose of his counsel was to exalt and magnify his mercy above all his other works, he being delighted with this excellent demonstration of it, in the mission, and manifestation, and crucifixion of his Son; he hath changed the ineffable name, into a name utterable by man and desirable by all the world, the majesty is all arrayed in robes of mercy, the tetragrammaton or adōreable mystery of the patriarchs is made fit for pronounciation and expression, when it becometh the name of the Lord's Christ. And if Jehovah be full of majesty and terror, the name Jesus is full of sweetness and mercy. It is God clothed with circumstances of facility, and opportunities of approximation. The great and highest name of God could not be pronounced truly till it came to be finished with a guttural that made up the name given by the angel to this holy child; nor God received or entertained by men till he was made human and sensible by the adoption of a sensitive nature, like vowels pronounciable by the intertexture of a consonant. Thus was his person made tangible, and his name utterable, and his mercy brought home to our necessities, and the mystery made explicate, at the circumcision of this holy babe.

But now God's mercy was at full sea, now was the time when God made no reserves to the effusion of his mercy. For to the patriarchs and persons of eminent sanctity and employment in the elder ages of the world, God according to the degrees of his manifestation or present purpose would give them one letter of this ineffable name. For the reward that Abraham had in the change of his name, was that he had the honour done him to have one of the letters of Jehovah put into it: and so had Joshua when he was a type of Christ, and the Prince of the Israelitish armies. And when God took away one of these letters, it was a curse.\* But now he communicated all

\* Isa. 21. 11, in casu Idumææ; Dama vocatur, dempto H.



the whole name to his holy child, and put a letter more to it, to signify that he was the glory of God, the express image of his Father's person, God eternal; and then manifested to the world in his humanity, that all the intelligent world who expected beatitude and had treasured all their hopes in the ineffable name of God, might find them all with ample returns in his name of Jesus, which God hath exalted above every name, even above that by which God in the old Testament did represent the greatest awfulness of his majesty. This miraculous name is above all the powers of magical enchantments, the nightly rites of sorcerers, the secrets of Memphis, the drugs of Thessaly, the silent and mysterious murmurs of the wise Chaldees, and the spells of Zoroastres. This is the name at which the devils did tremble, and pay their enforced and involuntary adorations, by confessing the Divinity, and quitting their possessions and usurped habitations. If our prayers be made in this name God opens the windows of heaven and rains down benediction: at the mention of this name the blessed apostles, and Hermione, the daughter of St. Philip, and Philotheus the son of Theophyla, and St. Hilarion, and St. Paul the hermit, and innumerable other lights who followed hard after the Sun of righteousness, wrought great and prodigious miracles; *Signs and wonders and healings were done by the name of the holy child Jesus.* This is the name which we should engrave in our hearts and write upon our foreheads, and pronounce with our most harmonious accents, and rest our faith upon, and place our hopes in, and love with the overflowings of charity, and joy, and adoration. And as the revelation of this name satisfied the hopes of all the world, so it must determine our worshippings, and the addresses of our exterior and interior religion; it being that name whereby God and God's mercies are made presential to us and proportionate objects of our religion and affections.

## THE PRAYER.

MOST holy and ever blessed Jesu, who art infinite in essence, glorious in mercy, mysterious in thy communications, affable and presential in the descents of thy humanity, I adore thy glorious name whereby thou hast shut up the abysses, and opened the gates of heaven, restraining the power of hell, and discovering and communicating the treasures of thy Father's mercies. O Jesu, be thou a Jesus unto me, and save me from the precipices and ruins of sin, from the expresses of thy Father's wrath, from the miseries and unsufferable torments of accursed spirits by the power of thy majesty, by the sweetnesses of thy mercy, and sacred influences and miraculous glories of thy name. I adore and worship thee in thy excellent obedience and humility, who hast submitted thy innocent and spotless flesh to the bloody covenant of circumcision; teach me to practise so blessed and holy a precedent, that I may be humble and obedient to thy sacred laws, severe and regular in my religion, mortified in my body and spirit, of circumcised heart and tongue, that what thou didst represent in symbol and mystery, I may really express in the exhibition of an exemplar, pious, and mortified life, cutting off all excrescencies of my spirit, and whatsoever may minister to the flesh, or any of its ungodly desires, that now thy holy name is called upon me, I may do no dishonour to the name, nor scandal to the institution, but may do thee honour and worship and adorations of a pure religion, O most holy and ever blessed Jesu, Amen.

## DISCOURSE II.

*Of the Virtue of Obedience.*

THERE are certain excellencies either of habit or consideration, which spiritual persons use to call

*general ways*, being a dispersed influence into all the parts of good life, either directing the single actions to the right end, or managing them with right instruments, and adding special excellencies and formalities to them, or morally inviting to the repetition of them; but they are like the general medicaments in physic, or the prime instruments in mathematical disciplines, such as are the consideration of the divine presence, the example of Jesus, right intention; and such also is the virtue of obedience, which perfectly unites our actions to God, and conforms us to the divine will, which is the original of goodness, and sanctifies and makes a man an holocaust to God, which contains in it eminently all other graces, but especially those graces whose essence consists in a conformity of a part or the whole; (such are faith, humility, patience, and charity) which gives quietness and tranquillity to the spirit, and is an antepast of paradise (where their jubilee is the perpetual joys of obedience, and their doing is the enjoying the divine pleasure), which adds an excellency and lustre to pious actions, and hallows them which are indifferent, and lifts up some actions from their unhallowed nature to circumstances of good and of acceptance. If a man says his prayers, or communicates out of custom, or without intuition of the precept and divine commandment, the act is like a ship returning from her voyage without her venture and her burthen, as unprofitable as without stowage. But if God commands us either to eat or to abstain; to sleep or to be waking; to work or to keep a sabbath; these actions, which are naturally neither good nor evil, are sanctified by the obedience, and ranked amongst actions of the greatest excellency. And this also was it which made Abraham's offer to kill his son, and the Israelites spoiling the Egyptians, to become acts laudable and not unjust: they were acts of obedience, and therefore had the same formality and essence with actions of the most spiritual devotions. God's

command is all our rule for practice, and our obedience united to the obedience of Jesus is all our title to acceptance.

But by obedience I do not here mean the exterior execution of the work, for so, obedience is no grace distinct from the acting any or all the commandments; but besides the doing of the thing (for that also must be pre-supposed) it is a sacrifice of our proper will to God, a choosing the duty because God commands it. For beasts also carry burdens and do our commands by compulsion; and the fear of slaves and the rigour of task masters made the number of bricks to be completed when Israel groaned and cried to God for help. But sons that labour under the sweet paternal regiment of their fathers, and the influence of love, they love the precept and do the imposition, with the same purposes and compliant affections with which the fathers made it. When Christ commanded us to renounce the world, there were some that did think it was a hard saying, and do so still; and the young rich man forsook him upon it: but Ananias and Saphira upon whom some violences were done by custom, or the excellent sermons of the apostles, sold their possessions too, but it was so against their will that they retained part of it: but St. Paul did not only forsake all his secular fortunes, but counted all to be dross that he might gain Christ; he gave his will, made an offertory of that, as well as of his goods, choosing the act which was enjoined, this was the obedience the holy Jesus paid to his heavenly Father, so voluntary that it was *meet to him to do his Father's will*.

And this was intended always by God (*my son give me thy heart*) and particularly by the holy Jesus, for in the sadest instance of all his precepts, even that of suffering persecution, we are commanded to

*rejoice, and to be exceeding glad.*\* And so did those holy martyrs in the primitive ages, who upon just grounds when God's glory, or the edification of the church had interest in it, they offered themselves to tyrants, and dared the violence of the most cruel and bowelless hangmen. And this is the best oblation we can present to God. *To offer gold is a present fit to be made by young beginners in religion, not by men in christianity. Yea Crates the Theban threw his gold away, and so did Antisthenes; but to offer our will to God, to give ourselves, is the act of an apostle, the proper act of christians.* And therefore when the apostles made challenge of a reward, for leaving all their possessions, Christ makes no reply to the instance, nor says you *who have left all*, but you *who have followed me in the regeneration, shall sit upon twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel*: meaning that the quitting the goods was nothing: but the obedience to Christ, that they followed Jesus in the regeneration, going themselves in pursuit of him, and giving themselves to him, that was it which entitled them to a throne.

And this therefore God enjoins, that our offerings to him may be entire and complete, that we pay him a holocaust, that we do his work without murmuring, and that his burthen may become easy, when it is borne up by the wings of love and alacrity of spirit. For in effect this obedience of the will is in true speaking and strict theology nothing else, but that charity which gives excellency to alms, and energy to faith, and acceptance to all graces. But I shall reduce this to particular and more minute considerations.

1. We shall best know that our will is in the obedience by our prompt undertaking, by our chearful

\* S. Hieron. epist. ad Licin. Hispan.

† Idem in 19. Matt. 23.

managing, by our swift execution; \* for all degrees of delay are degrees of immorigerousness, and unwillingness. And since time is extrinsical to the act, and alike to every part of it, nothing determines an action but the opportunity without; and the desires and willingness within. And therefore he who deliberates beyond his first opportunity, and exterior determination and appointment of the act, brings fire and wood, but wants a lamb for the sacrifice; and unless he offer up his Isaac, his beloved will, he hath no ministry prepared for God's acceptance. He that does not repent to day, puts it to the question whether he will repent at all or no. He that defers restitution, when all the circumstances are fitted, is not yet resolved upon the duty. And when he does it, if he does it against his will, he does but do honorary penance with a paper upon his hat, and a taper in his hand; it may satisfy the law, but not satisfy his conscience; it neither pleases himself, and less pleases God. A sacrifice without a heart was a sad and ominous presage in the superstition of the Roman augurs, and so it is in the service of God; for what the exhibition of the work is to man, that the presentation of the will is to God. It is but a cold charity to a naked beggar to say, God help thee, and do nothing; give him clothes and he feels your charity: but God, who is the searcher of the heart, his apprehension of actions relative to him is of the inward motions, and addresses of the will, and without this our exterior services are like the paying of a piece of money, in which we have defaced the image, it is not current.

2. But besides the willingness to do the acts of express command, the readiness to do the intimations and tacit significations of God's pleasure is the best testimony in the world that our will is in the obedience.

\* *Fidelis obediens nescit moras, fugit crastinum, ignorat tarditatem, præcipit præcipientem, parat oculos visui, aures auditui, linguam voci, manus operi, itineri pedes: totum se colligit, & imperantis colligit voluntatem. St. Bernard serm. de obedient. Et barbaris cunctatio servilis statim exequi Regium, Tacit. l. 6. annal.*

Thus did the holy Jesus undertake a nature of infirmity, and suffer a death of shame and sorrow, and became obedient from the circumcision even unto the death of the cross; not staying for a command, but because it was his Father's pleasure mankind should be redeemed. For before the susception of it he was not a person subicible to a command. It was enough that he understood the inclinations and designs of his Father's mercies. And therefore God hath furnished us with instances of uncommanded piety to be a touchstone of our obedience. He that does but his endeavours about the express commands hath a bridle in his mouth, and is restrained by violence, but a willing spirit is like a greedy eye, devours all it sees and hopes to make some proportionable returns and compensations of duty for his infirmity, by taking in the intimations of God's pleasure. When God commands chastity, he that undertakes a holy celibate, hath great obedience to the command of chastity. God bids us give alms of our increase; he obeys this with great facility that sells all his goods and gives them to the poor. And, provided our hastiness to snatch at too much does not make us let go our duty, like the indiscreet loads of too forward persons, too big, or too inconvenient and uncombined, there is not in the world a greater probation of our prompt obedience, than when we look further than the precise duty, swallowing that and more with our ready and hopeful purposes, nothing being so able to do miracles as love, and yet nothing being so certainly accepted as love, though it could do nothing in productions and exterior ministeries.

3. But God requires that our obedience should have another excellency to make it a becoming present to the divine acceptance; our understanding must be sacrificed too, and become an ingredient of our obedience. We must also believe that whatsoever God commands, is most fitting to be commanded, is most excellent in itself, and the best for us to

do. The first gives our affections and desires to God, and this also gives our reason; and is a perfection of obedience not communicable to the duties we owe to man. For God only is Lord of this faculty, and being the fountain of all wisdom, therefore commands our understanding, because he alone can satisfy it. We are bound to obey human laws, but not bound to think the laws we live under are the most prudent constitutions in the world. But God's commandments are not only a *lantern to our feet*, and a *light* unto our paths, but a rule to our reason, and satisfaction to our understandings, as being the instruments of our address to God, and conveyances of his grace and manuductions to eternity. And therefore S. John Climacus defines obedience to be an "unexamined and unquestioned motion; a voluntary death and sepulture of the will, a life without curiosity, a laying aside our own discretion in the midst of the riches of the most excellent understandings."

And certainly there is not in the world a greater strength against temptations, than is deposited in an obedient understanding, because that only can regularly produce the same affections, it admits of fewer degrees, and an infrequent alteration. But the actions proceeding from the appetite as it is determined by any other principle than a satisfied understanding, have their heightnings and their declensions, and their chances and mutations according to a thousand accidents. Reason is more lasting than desire, and with fewer means to be tempted; but affections and motions of appetite as they are procured by any thing, so may they expire by as great variety of causes. And therefore to serve God by way of understanding is surer, and itself, unless it be by the accidental increase of degrees, greater than to serve him upon the motion and principle of passions and desires; though this be fuller of comfort and pleasure than the other. When Lot lived amongst the Sodomites, where his righteous soul was in a continual agony, he had few



exterior incentive to a pious life, nothing to enkindle the sensible flame of burning desires toward piety; but in the midst of all the discouragements of the world, nothing was left him but the way and precedency of a truly informed reason and conscience. Just so is the way of those wise souls who live in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, where piety is but of countenance, where austerity is ridiculous, religion under persecution, no examples to lead us on, there the understanding is left to be the guide, and it does the work the surest, for this makes the duty of many to be certain, regular, and chosen, constant, integral, and perpetual; but this way is like the life of an unmarried or a retired person, less of grief in it, and less of joy. But the way of serving God with the affections, and with the pleasures and entertainments of desires, is the way of the more passionate and imperfect, not in a man's power to choose or to procure, but comes by a thousand chances, meeting with a soft nature, credulous or weak, easy or ignorant, softened with fears, or invited by forward desires.

Those that did live amidst the fervors of the primitive charity, and were warmed by their fires, grew inflamed by contact and vicinity to such burning and shining lights. And they therefore grew to high degrees of piety, because then every man made judgment of his own actions by the proportions which he saw before him, and believed all descents from those greater examples to be so many degrees from the rule. And he that lives in a college of devout persons will compare his own actions with the devotion and customs of that society, and not with the remissness of persons he hears of in story, but what he sees and lives with. But if we live in an age of indevotion we think ourselves well assoiled if we be warmer than their ice; every thing which is above our example being eminent and conspicuous, though it be but like the light of a glow worm, or the sparkling of a dia-

mond, yet if it be in the midst of darkness, it is a goodly beauty. This I call the way of serving God by desires and affections; and this is altered by example, by public manners, by external works, by the assignment of offices, by designation of conventions for prayer, by periods and revolutions of times of duty, by hours and solemnities, so that a man shall owe his piety to these chances, which although they are graces of God, and instruments of devotion, yet they are not always in our power; and therefore they are but accidental ministèries of a good life, and the least constant or durable. But when the principle of our piety is a conformity of our understanding to God's laws, when we are instructed what to do, and therefore do it because we are satisfied it is most excellent to obey God, this will support our piety against objections, lead it on in despite of disadvantages; this chooses God with reason, and is not determined from without; and as it is in some degree necessary for all times, so it is the greatest security against the change of laws, and princes, and religions, and ages, when all the incentives of affection and exterior determinations of our piety shall cease, and perhaps all external offices and the daily sacrifice, and piety itself shall fail from the face of the land; then the obedience founded in the understanding is the only lasting strength is left us to make retreat, and to secure our conditions. Thus from the composition of the will and affections with our exterior acts of obedience to God, our obedience is made willing, swift, and cheerful: but from the composition of the understanding our obedience becomes strong, sincere, and persevering, and this is that which St. Paul calls our reasonable service.

4. To which if we add that our obedience be universal, we have all the qualifications which make the duty to be pious and prudent. The meaning is, that we obey God in all his sanctions though the matter be in common account small and inconsiderable, and

give no indulgence to ourselves to recede from the rule in any matter whatsoever. For the veriest minute of obedience is worth our attention, as being by God esteemed the trial of our obedience in a greater affair. \* *He that is unjust in a little, will be unjust in a greater*, said our blessed Saviour. And since 'tō God all matter is alike, and no more accrues to him in a hecatomb, than in a piece of gum in an ascetic severity than in a secular life, God regards not the matter of a precept, but the obedience which in all instances is the same; and he that will prevaricate when the matter is trifling, and by consequence, the temptations to it weak and impotent, and soon confuted, will think he may better be excused when the temptations are violent and importunate, as it commonly happens in affairs of greater importance. He that will lie to save sixpence, will not stick at it, when a thousand pound is the purchase: and possibly there is more contempt and despite done to the divine authority when we disobey it in such particulars, wherein the obedience is most easy, and the temptations less troublesome; I do not say there is more injustice, or more malice in a small disobedience than in a greater, but there is either more contempt, or more negligence and dissolution of discipline, than in the other.

And it is no small temptation of the devil soliciting of us not to be curious of scruples and grains, nor to disturb our peace for lighter disobediences; persuading us that something must be indulged to public manners, something to the civilities of society, something to nature, and to the approaches of our passions, and the motions of our first desires; but that we be not over righteous. And true it is, that sometimes such surreptions and smaller underencies are therefore pardoned and lessened almost to a nulli-

\* Luke 16, 10.

ty, because they dwell in the confines of things lawful and honest, and are not so notorious as to be separated from permissions, by any public, certain and universal cognisance, and therefore may pass upon a good man sometimes without observation. But it is a temptation when we think of neglecting them by a pre-determined incuriousness; upon pretence they are small. But this must be reduced to more regular conclusions.

1. Although smaller disobediences, expressed in slight mis-becoming actions when they come by surprise and sudden invasion, are through the mercies of God dashed in the very approach, their bills of accusation are thrown out, and they are not esteemed as competent instruments of separation from God's love; yet when a smaller sin comes by design, and is acted with knowledge and deliberation (for then it is properly an act of disobedience) *Malitia supplet defectum ætatis*, the malice of the agent heightens the smallness of the act, and makes up the iniquity. To drink liberally once, and something more freely than the strict rules of Christian sobriety and temperance permit, is pardoned the easier, when without deliberation and by surprise the person was abused, who intended not to transgress a minute, but by little and little was mistaken in his proportions: but if a man by design shall estimate his draughts and his good fellowship, and shall resolve upon a little intemperance, thinking because it is not very much, it is therefore none at all; that man hath mistaken himself into a crime; and although a little wound upon the finger is very curable, yet the smallest prick upon the heart is mortal; so is a design and purpose of the smallest disobedience in its formality, as malicious and destructive, as in its matter it was pardonable and excusable.

2. Although every lesser disobedience, when it comes singly, destroys not the love of God; for al-

though it may lessen the habit, <sup>a</sup> yet it takes not away its natural being, nor interrupts its acception, lest all the world should in all instants of time be in a damnable condition) yet when these smaller obliquities are repeated, and no repentance intervenes, this repetition combines and unites the lesser till they be concentrated and by their accumulation make a crime; and therefore a careless reiterating, and an incurious walking in mis-becoming actions is deadly and damnable in the return, though it was not so much at the setting forth. Every idle word is to be accounted for, but we hope in much mercy; and yet, he that gives himself over to immoderate <sup>b</sup> talking, will swell his account to a vast and mountainous proportion, and call all the lesser escapes into a stricter judgement. He that extends his recreation an hour beyond the limits of christian prudence; and the analogy of its severity and employment is accountable to God for that improvidence and waste of time; but he that shall mispend a day, and because that sin is not scandalous like adultery, or clamorous like oppression, or unusual like beastiality, or crying for revenge like detaining the portion of orphans, shall therefore mispend another day without revocation of the first by an act of repentance and redemption of it, and then shall throw away a week, still adding to the former account upon the first stock, will at last be answerable for a habit of idleness, and will have contracted a vain and impertinent spirit. For since things, which in their own kind are lawful, become sinful by the degree, if the degree be heightened by intention; or become great like a heap of sand by a coacervation of the innumerable atoms of dust, the actions are as damnable, as any of the natural daugh-

<sup>a</sup> Quæ humanæ fragilitati quamvis parvâ tamen crebriâ subreperant, si collectatæ contra nos fuerint, ita nos gravabunt et opprimunt, sicut unum aliquod grande peccatum. *S. Aug. lib. 50. hom. 50.* Idem lib. de pœnit. peccata venialia si multiplicentur decorem nostrorum vitæ exterminant, ut à cœlestis sponsi amplexibus nos separent. <sup>b</sup> ἡ χάρις ματαία ζήλια προσκρίεται. *Æsop. Prometi.* Ἀχαλίας σωματων τίλθ. δυσυχία. *Eurip.*

ters and productions of hell; when they are entertained without scruple, and renewed without repentance, and continued without dereliction.

3. Although some inadvertencies of our life, and lesser disobediences, accidentally become less hurtful, and because they are entailed upon the infirmities of a good man, and the less wary customs and circumstances of society, are also consistent with the state of grace, yet all affection to the smallest sins becomes deadly and damnable; *he that loves his danger shall perish in it*, saith the wise man; <sup>a</sup>and every friendly entertainment of an undecency invites in a greater crime; for no man can love a small sin, but there is in the greater crimes of its kind more desirable flatteries, and more satisfactions of sensuality than in those suckers and sprigs of sin. At first, a little disobedience is proportionable to a man's temper, and his conscience is not fitted to the bulk of a rude crime; but when a man hath accepted the first insinuations of delight, and swallowed it, that little sin is past, and needs no more to dispute for entrance; then the next design puts in and stands in the same probability to succeed the first, and greater than the first had to make the entry. However to love any thing that God hates is direct enmity with him; and whatsoever the instance be, it is absolutely inconsistent with charity, and therefore incompetent with the state of grace. So that if the sin be small, it is not a small thing that thou hast given thy love to it; every such person perishes like a fool, cheaply and ingloriously.

4. But it also concerns the niceness and prudence of obedience to God to stand at further distance from a vice than we usually attend to. <sup>b</sup>For many times virtue and vice differ but one degree, and the neighbourhood is so dangerous that he who de-

<sup>a</sup> Nullum peccatum est adeo veniale quod non fiat criminale, dum placet. dist. 25. sect. Nunc autem. ex S. August. libidinum discernunt avidi. Horat.

<sup>b</sup> Cum fas atq; nefas exiguo fine

sires to secure his obedience and duty to God will remove farther from the danger. For there is a rule of justice, to which if one degree more of severity be added it degenerates into cruelty, and a little more mercy is remissness, and want of discipline introduces licentiousness and becomes unmercifulness as to the public, and unjust as to the particular. Now this consideration is heightened if we observe that virtue and vice consist not in an indivisible point, but there is a latitude for either which is not to be judged by any certain rules drawn from the nature of the thing, but to be estimated in proportion to the persons and other accidental circumstances. He that is burdened with a great charge, for whom he is bound under a curse, and the crime of infidelity, to provide, may go further in the acquisition, and be more provident in the use of his money, than those persons for whom God hath made more ample provisions, and hath charged them with fewer burdens and engagements economical. And yet no man can say, that just beyond such a degree of care stands covetousness, and thus far on this side is carelessness, and a man may be in the confines of death before he be aware. Now the only way to secure our obedience and duty in such cases is to remove further off, and not to dwell upon the confines of the enemy's country. My meaning is, that it is not prudent, nor safe for a man to do whatsoever he lawfully may do.

For besides that we are often mistaken in our judgments concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of actions, he that will do all that he thinks he may lawfully do, if ever he does change his station and increase in giving himself liberty, will quickly arrive at doing things unlawful. It is good to keep a reserve of our liberty, and to restrain ourselves within bounds narrower than the largest sense of the commandment, that when our affections wander and enlarge themselves (as sometime or other they will do) then they may enlarge beyond the ordinary, and yet be within

the bounds of lawfulness. That of which men make a scruple and a question at first, after an habitual resolution of it stirs no more; but then their question is of something beyond it. When a man hath accustomed himself to pray seven times a day, it will a little trouble his peace if he omits one or two of those times; but if it be resolved then that he may please God with praying devoutly though but thrice every day; after he hath digested the scruples of this first question, possibly some accidents may happen that will put his conscience and reason to dispute whether three times be indispensably necessary, and still if he be far within the bounds of lawfulness, it is well; but if he be at the margin of it, his next remove may be into dissolution and unlawfulness. He that resolves to gain all that he may lawfully this year, it is odds but next year he will be tempted to gain something unlawfully. He that because a man may be innocently angry will never restrain his passion, in a little time will be intemperate in his anger, and mistake both his object and the degree. Thus facetiousness and urbanity entertained with an open hand will turn into jestings that are uncomely.

If you will be secure, remove your tent, dwell further off; God hath given us more liberty than we may safely use; and although God is so gracious as to comply much with our infirmities, yet if we do so too, as God's goodness in indulging liberty to us was to prevent our sinning, our complying with ourselves will engage us in it: but if we imprison and confine our affections into a narrower compass, then our extravagancies may be imperfect, but will not easily be criminal. The dissolution of a scrupulous and strict person is not into a vice, but into a less degree of virtue; he that makes a conscience of loud laughter, will not easily be drawn into the wantonnesses of balls and revellings, and the longer and more impure carnivals. This is the way to secure our obedience;



and no men are so curious of their health, as they that are scrupulous of the air they breathe in.

But now for our obedience to man, that hath distinct considerations, and apart.

1. All obedience to man is for God's sake; for <sup>a</sup> God imprinting his authority upon the sons of men, like the sun reflecting upon a cloud, produces a parallel, or a representation of his own glory, though in great distances and imperfection: it is the divine authority, though characted upon a piece of clay, and imprinted upon a weak and imperfect man: and therefore obedience to our superiors must be universal in respect of persons; to all superiors. This precept is expressly apostolical, <sup>b</sup> *Be subject to every constitution and authority of man for the Lord's sake*: It is for God's sake, and therefore to every one, <sup>c</sup> *Whether it be to the King as supreme, or to his ministers in subordination*: That is for civil government; for ecclesiastical this; *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account*: All upon whom any ray of the divine authority is imprinted, whether it be in greater or smaller characters, are in proportion to their authority to be obeyed; <sup>d</sup> *all upon the same ground*; [*for there is no power but of God*.] So that no infirmity of person, no undervaluing circumstance, no exterior accident is an excuse for disobedience; and to obey the divine authority passing through the dictates of a wise, excellent and prudent governor; but to neglect the impositions of a looser head, is to worship Christ only upon the Mount Tabor, and in the glories of his transfiguration, and to despise him upon Mount Calvary, and in the clouds of his inglorious and humble passion: *Not only to the*

<sup>a</sup> ἵκασι τῶν ἐξ Ἰθνὸς ἐν θεῷ τι γίνῃ· τὸ βασιλικὸν ὑπολαμβάνοντες, διὰς αὐτοῖς παύλας ἐπέσσαν· ἢ τοῖνυν οἷς μὲν τὸ εὐγενὲς ἢ τὸ βασιλικὸν ἀκρως ἐπέωρεσεν ἐκ Διὸς τῶντος ἐπείον κατὰ γένῃ. Eustath. ad Iliad. 1. <sup>b</sup> 1 Pet. 2. 13. <sup>c</sup> Heb. 13. 7.

<sup>d</sup> Rom. 13. 1. <sup>e</sup> Regum timendorum in proprios greges, Reges in ipsos imperium est Jovis, cuncta supercilio moventis, Hor. l. 3. Od. 1. ubi supra.

*good and gentle* (so S. Peter,) *but to the harsh and rigid.* And it was by divine providence that all those many and stricter precepts of obedience to governors in the New Testament, were verified by instances of tyrants, persecutors, idolaters, and heathen princes; and for others amongst whom there was variety of disposition, there is no variety of imposition, but all excuses are removed, and all kinds of governors drawn into the sanction and sacredness of authority.

2. *Not only to all governors, but in all things we must obey.* *Children obey your parents in all things:* And <sup>a</sup> *servants obey your masters in all things.* And this also is upon the same ground, <sup>b</sup> *Do it as unto Christ; as unto the Lord, and not unto men.* But then this restrains the universality of obedience, that it may run within its own channel; *as unto the Lord;* therefore nothing against the divine commandment. For if God speaks to us by man, transmitting laws for conservation of civil society, for ecclesiastical policy, for justice and personal advantages, for the interests of virtue and religion, for discountenancing of vice, we are to receive it with the same veneration as if God spake himself to us immediately. But because by his terror upon Mount Sinai he gave testimony how great favour it is to speak to us by the ministration of our brethren, it were a strange impudence when we desire a proportionable and gentle instrument of divine commands, we should for this very proportion despise the minister; like the frogs in the apologue insulting upon their wooden king. But then if any thing come contrary to a divine law, know it is the voice of Jacob, of the supplanter, not of the right heir; and though we must obey man for God's sake, yet we must never disobey God for man's sake. In all things else we find no exception; but according as the superiors intend the obligation and express it by the signature of laws, customs, interpretations, permis-

<sup>a</sup> Col. 3. 20. 22.

<sup>b</sup> Ephes. 6. 5.

sions, and dispensations, that is, so far as the law is obligatory in general, and not dispensed with in particular, so far obedience is a duty, in all instances of acts where no sin is ingredient.

3. And here also the smallness and cheapness of the duty does not tolerate disobedience; for the despising the smallest injunction is an act of as formal and direct rebellion as when the prevarication is in a higher instance. It is here as in divine laws, but yet with some difference: for small things do so little co-operate to the end of human laws, that a smaller reason does by way of interpretation and tacit permission dispense, than can in a divine sanction though of the lowest offices. Because God commands duties not for the end to which they of themselves do co-operate, but to make sacred his authority, and that we by our obedience may confess him to be Lord: but in human laws the authority is made sacred, not primarily for itself, but principally that the laws made in order to the conservation of societies may be observed. So that in the neglect of the smallest of divine ordinances we as directly oppose God's great purpose and intendment, as in greater matters: God's dominion and authority (the conservation of which was his principal intention,) is alike neglected: but in omitting an human imposition of small concernment the case is different; it is certain there is not any considerable violence done to the public interest by a contemptible omission of a law: the thing is not small, if the common-wealth be not safe, and all her great ends secured; but if they be, then the authority is inviolate, unless a direct contempt were intended, for its being was in order to that end, not for itself, as it is in the case of divine laws, but that the public interest be safe.

And therefore as great matters of human laws may be omitted for great reasons, so may smaller matters for smaller reasons, but never without

<sup>a</sup> De minimis non curat lex.

reason: for causelessly and contemptuously are all one. But in the application of the particulars, either the laws themselves, or custom, or the prudence of a sincere, righteous man, or of a wise and disinterested person is to be the judge. But let no man's confidence increase from the smallness of the matter to a contempt of the authority; for there are some sins whose malignity is accidentally increased by the slightness of the subject matter, such are blasphemy, perjury, and the contempt of authority. To blaspheme God for the loss of an asper or a penny, to be forsworn in judgement for the rescuing of a few maravidis, or a five groats fine, is a worse crime than to be perjured for the saving ten thousand pounds; and to despise authority, when the obedience is so easy as the wearing of a garment, or doing of a posture, is a greater and more impudent contempt, than to despise authority imposing a great burthen of a more considerable pressure, where human infirmity may tempt to a disobedience, and lessen the crime. And let this caution also be inserted, that we do not at all neglect small impositions, if there be direct and signal injunction in the particular instance. For as a great body of light transmitting his rays through a narrow hollowness does by that small pyramis represent all the parts of its magnitude and glory: so it may happen that a public interest, and the concerns of authority, and the peace of a church, and the integral obedience of the subjects, and the conservation of a community, may be transferred to us by an instance in its own nature inconsiderable; such as are wearing of a cognizance, remembering of a word, carrying a branch in time of war, and things of the same nature; and therefore when the hand of authority is stretched out, and held forth upon a precept, and designs the duty upon particular reason, or with actual intuition; there is not the same facility of being dispensed with, as in the neglected and unconsidered instances of other duties.

This only I desire to be observed; that if death or any violent accident, imprisonment, loss of livelihood, or intolerable inconveniencies be made accidentally consequent to the observing of a law merely human, the law binds not in the particular instance. No man is bound to be a martyr for a ceremony, or to die rather than break a canon, or to suffer confiscation of goods for the pertinacious keeping of a civil constitution. And it is not to be supposed that a lawgiver would have decreed a rite, and bound the lives of the subjects to it, which are of a far greater value than a rite, not only because it were tyrannical and unreasonable, but because the evil of the law were greater than the good of it, it were against the reason of all laws, and destroys the privileges of nature, and it puts a man into a condition as bad as the want of all laws, for nothing is civilly or naturally worse than death, to which the other evils arrive in their proportion. This is to be understood in particular and positive precepts, introduced for reasons particular, that is, less than those are which combine all societies, and which are the cement of all bodies political: I mean laws ritual in the church and accidental and emergent in the state. And that, which is the best sign to distinguish these laws from others, is also the reason of the assertion. Laws decreed with a penalty to the transgressors cannot bind to an evil greater than that penalty. If it be appointed that we use a certain form of liturgy under the forfeiture of five pound, for every omission, I am bound in conscience to obey it, where I can; but I am supposed legally to be disabled, if any tyrant power shall threaten to kill me if I do, or make me pay an hundred pound, or any thing greater than the forfeiture of the law. For all the civil and natural power of the law is by its coercion, and the appendent punishment. The law operates by rewards and punishments, by hope and fear, and it is unimaginable that the law under a less penalty can oblige us in any case or accident to suffer a greater. For the compul-

sion of the tyrant is greater than the coercion of the lawgiver; and the prince thinking the penalty annexed to be band sufficient, intended no greater evil to the transgressor, than the expressed penalty; and therefore much less would he have them that obey the law by any necessity be forced to a greater evil: for then, disobedience should escape better than obedience. True it is, every disobeying person, that pays the penalty, is not quite discharged from all his obligation; but it is then, when his disobeying is criminal upon some other stock besides the mere breach of the law; as contempt, scandal, or the like; for the law binds the conscience indirectly and by consequence; that is, in plain language, God commands us to obey human laws, and the penalty will not pay for the contempt, because that is a sin against God; it pays for the violation of the law, <sup>a</sup> because that was all the direct transgression against man. And then who shall make him recompense for suffering more than the law requires of him: not the prince; for it is certain the greatest value he set upon the law, was no bigger than the penalty; and the commonwealth is supposed to be sufficiently secured in her interest by the penalty, or else the law was weak, impotent, and unreasonable. Not God, for it is not an act of obedience to him; for he binds us no further to obey human laws, than the lawgiver himself intends or declares; who cannot reasonably be supposed so over careful, as to bind hay with cords of silk and gold, or sumptuary laws with the threads of life; nor a father commanding his child to wait on him every meal, be thought to intend his obligation, even though the house be ready to fall on his head, or when he is to pass a sudden or unfordable flood, before he can get to him; and that it may appear, man ought not, it is certain, God him-

<sup>a</sup> Lucius Veratius pro delectamento habuit os hominis liberi palma verberare. Tum servus aequabatur crumenam plenam assium gestans, et quemcunque percussit, jussit statim numerari viginti quinque asses, qui pro multa huic offensæ ex lege duodecim tabulas imponebantur. *4. Gell. l. 20. c. 1.*

self doth not oblige us in all cases, and in all circumstances to observe every of his positive precepts. For <sup>a</sup> *assembling together* is a duty of God's commanding; which we are not to neglect: but if death waits at the door of these assemblies, we have the practice of the primitive and best Christians to warrant us, to serve God in retirements, and cells, and wildernesses, and leave the assembling together till better opportunities. If I receive more benefit, or the commonwealth or the church and religion any greater advantage by my particular obedience in these circumstances, (which cannot easily be supposed will be) it is a great act of charity to do it, and then to suffer for it. But if it be no more, that is, <sup>b</sup> if it be not expressly commanded to be done (though with loss of life or confiscation,) it is a good charity to save my own life, or my own estate: and though the other may be better, yet I am not in all cases obliged to do that which is simply the best. It is a tolerable infirmity, and allowed amongst the very first permissions of nature, that I may preserve my life, unless it be in a very few cases, which are therefore clearly to be expressed, or else the contrary is to be presumed, as being a case most favourable. And it is considerable, that nothing is worse than death, but damnation, or something that partakes of that in some of its worst ingredients; such as is a lasting torment, or a daily great misery in some other kind. And therefore since no human law can bind a man to a worse thing than death, if obedience brings me to death, I cannot be worse when I disobey it, and I am not so bad, if the penalty of death be not expressed. And so for other penalties in their own proportions.

This discourse is also to be understood concerning the laws of peace, not of war; not only because every disobedience in war may be punished with death (according as the reason may chance) but also because

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 10. 25.

<sup>b</sup> Vide par. 2. Disc. 9. n. 11.

little things may be of great and dangerous consequence. But in peace it is observable, that there is no human positive superinduced law, but by the practice of all the world (which, because the permission of the prince is certainly included in it, is the surest interpretation) it is dispensed withal, by ordinary necessities, by reason of lesser inconveniencies, and common accidents: such as the not saying of our office daily is excused by the study of divinity; the publishing the banns of matrimony by an ordinary incommodity; the fasting-days of the church by a little sickness or a journey, and therefore much rather, if my estate, and most of all, if my life be in danger with it: and to say that in these cases there is no interpretative permission to omit the particular action, is to accuse the laws and the lawgiver, the one of unreasonableness, the other of uncharitableness.

4. These considerations are upon the execution of the duty: but even towards man our obedience must have a mixture of the will and choice, like as our injunction of obedience to the divine command. *With good will doing service* (saith the apostle) for it is impossible to secure the 'duty of inferiors' but by conscience and good will; unless provision could be made against all their secret arts and concealments and escapings, which as no providence can foresee, so no diligence can cure. It is but an eye-service whatsoever is compelled and involuntary; nothing rules a man in private but God and his own desires, and that gives laws in a wilderness, and accuses in a cloister, and does execution in a closet, if there be any prevarication.

5. But obedience to human laws goes no further, we are not bound to obey with a direct and particular act of understanding, as in all divine sanctions: for so long as our superiors are fallible, though it be highly necessary we conform our wills to their innocent laws, yet it is not a duty we should think the laws most prudent or convenient; because all laws are not



so; but it may concern the interest of humility and self-denial to be subject to an inconvenient, so it be not a sinful command: for so we must chuse an affliction when God offers it, and give God thanks for it, and yet we may cry under the smart of it, and call to God for ease and remedy: and yet it were well, if inferiors would not be too busy in disputing the prudence of their governors, and the convenience of their constitutions; whether they be sins or no in the execution, and to our particulars, we are concerned to look to: I say, as to our particulars; for an action may be a sin in the prince commanding it, and yet innocent in the person executing: as in the case of unjust wars, in which the subject who cannot, ought not to be a judge, yet must be a minister; and it is notorious in the case of executing an unjust sentence, in which <sup>a</sup> not the executioner, but the judge is only the unjust person; and he that serves his prince in an unjust war, is but the executioner of an unjust sentence; but whatever goes further, does but undervalue the person, slight the government, and unloose the golden cords of discipline. For we are not entrusted in providing for degrees, so we secure the kind and condition of our actions. And since God having derived rays and beams of majesty, and transmitted it in parts upon several states of men, hath fixed human authority and dominion in the golden candlestick of understanding; <sup>b</sup> he that shall question the prudence of his governor, or the wisdom of his sanction, does unclasp the golden rings that tie the purple upon the prince's shoulder; he tempts himself with a reason to disobey, and extinguishes the light of majesty by overturning the candlestick, and hiding the opinion of his wisdom and understanding. And let me say this; he that is confident of his own understanding and reasonable powers (and who is more than he that

<sup>a</sup> Is damnum dat qui jubet dare; ejus verò nulla culpa est cui parere necesse sit. *Plinian. l. 130.*

<sup>b</sup> Μὴ ἐρίζῃς γενέσθαι πάντων δίκαια λόγους. *Luert.*

thinks himself wiser than the laws) needs no other devil in the neighbourhood, no tempter but himself, to pride and vanity, which are the natural parents of disobedience.

But a man's disobedience never seems so reasonable as when the subject is forbidden to do an act of piety, commanded indeed in the general, but uncommanded in certain circumstances.<sup>a</sup> A forward piety and assiduous devotion, a great and indiscreet mortifier, is often tempted to think no authority can restrain the fervours and distempers of zeal in such holy exercises; and yet it is very often as necessary to restrain the indiscretions of a forward person as to excite the remissness of the cold and frozen. Such persons were the <sup>b</sup>Sarabaites spoken of by Cassian, who were greater labourers and stricter mortifiers than the religious in families and colleges; and yet they endured no superior, nor laws. But such customs as these are humiliation without humility, humbling the body and exalting the spirit, or indeed sacrifices and no obedience. It was an argument of the great wisdom of the Fathers of the Desert, <sup>c</sup>when they heard of the prodigious severities exercised by Simeon Stylites upon himself, they sent one of the religious to him with power to enquire what was his manner of living, and what warrant he had for such a rigorous undertaking, giving in charge to command him to give it over, and to live in a community with them, and according to the common institution of those religious families. The messenger did so, and immediately Simeon removed his foot from his pillar, with a purpose to descend: but the other according to his commission called to him to stay telling him his station and severity was from God. And he that in so great a piety was humble and obedient, did not un-

<sup>a</sup> *Modum a tenere in eo difficile est quod bonum esse credideris. Sen. ep. 29.*

<sup>b</sup> *Collat. 18. c. 17.*

<sup>c</sup> *Apud Evagrium De eodem Stylite consulat lector, Epiph. l. 1. c. 13, Theod. & 7. Synod. Gener. & Baron. ad A. D. 432.*

dertake that strictness out of singularity, nor did it transport him to vanity; for that he had received from the fathers to make judgement of the man, and of his institution; whereas if upon pretence of the great holiness of that course he had refused the command, the spirit of the person was to be declared cautive and imprudent, and the man driven from his troublesome and ostentous vanity.

Our fasts, our prayers, our watchings, our intentions of duty, our frequent communions, and all exterior acts of religion are to be guided by our superior, if he sees cause to restrain or assuage any excrescency.\* For a wound may heal too fast, and then the tumour of the flesh is proud, not healthful; and so may the indiscretions of religion swell to vanity when we think they grow towards perfections; but when we can endure the caustics and correctives of our spiritual guides, in those things in which we are most apt to please ourselves, then our obedience is regular and humble, and in other things there is less of danger. There is a story told of a very religious person, whose spirit in the extasy of devotion was transported to the clarity of a vision, and he seemed to converse personally with the holy Jesus, feeling from such intercourse great spiritual delights and huge satisfactions: in the midst of these joys the bell called to prayers, and he, used to the strictness and well instructed in the necessities of obedience, went to the church, and having finished his devotions, returned and found the vision in the same posture of glories and entertainment; which also said to him, "Because thou hast left me thou hast found me, for if thou hadst not left me I had presently left thee." Whatever the story be I am sure it is a good parable; for the way to increase spiritual comforts is to be strict in the offices of humble obedience; and we never lose any thing of our joy by laying it aside to attend a duty;

\* Cassian collat. 4. Abbat. Da. c. 20. & S. Basil. exhort. ad vitam Monast. S. Greg. l. 35. Moral. c. 13. S. Bern. de ord. vitæ & morum iustit. c. 1.

and Plutarch reports more honour of Agesilaus prudence and modesty, than of his gallantry and military fortune; \* for he was more honorable by obeying the decree of the Spartan senate, recalling him from the midst of his triumphs, than he could have been by finishing the war with prosperous success and disobedience.

Our obedience being guided by these rules, is urged to us by the consignation of divine precepts and the loud voice of thunder, even sealed by a signet of God's right hand, the signature of greatest judgments. For God did with greater severity punish the rebellion of Korah and his company, than the express murmurs against himself, nay, than the high crime of idolatry: for this crime God visited them with a sword; but for disobedience and mutiny against their superiors, God made the earth to swallow some of them, and fire from heaven to consume the rest; to shew that rebellion is to be punished by the conspiracy of heaven and earth, as it is hateful and contradictory both to God and man. And it is not amiss to observe, that obedience to man being it is for God's sake, and yet to a person clothed with the circumstances and the same infirmities with ourselves, is a greater instance of humility, than to obey God immediately whose authority is divine, whose presence is terrible, whose power is infinite, and not at all depressed by exterior disadvantages or lessening appearances; just as it is both greater faith and greater charity to relieve a poor saint for Jesus sake, than to give any thing to Christ himself; if he should appear in all the robes of glory and immediate address. For it is to God, and to Christ, and wholly for their sakes, and to them that the obedience is done, or the charity expressed, but themselves are persons whose awfulness, majesty, and veneration, would rather force than invite obedience or alms. But when God

\* Titus Manlius securi percussit filium, postquam hostem gloriose vicerat in interdicta pugna. *A. Gell. l. 9. c. 13.*

and his holy Son stands behind the cloud, and sends their servants to take the homage, or the charity, it is the same as if it were done to them, but it receives the advantage of acceptation by the accidental adherencies of faith and humility to the several actions respectively. When a king comes to rebels in person, it strikes terror and veneration into them, who are too apt to neglect and despise the person of his ministers, whom they look upon as their fellow subjects, and consider not in the exaltation of a deputed majesty. Charles V. found a happy experience of it at Gaunt, in Flanders, whose rebellion he appeased by his presence, which he could hardly have done by his army. But if the king's authority be as much revered in his deputy as it is sacred in his own person, it is the greater humility and more confident obedience. And as it is certain that he is the most humble that submits to his inferiors, so in the same proportion, the lower and meaner the instrument upon which God's authority is borne, the higher is the grace that teaches us to stoop so low. I do not say that a sin against human laws is greater than a prevarication against a divine commandment; as the instances may be, the distance is next to infinite, and to touch the earth with our foot within the octaves of Easter, or to taste flesh upon days of abstinence (even in those places and to those persons where they did or do oblige) have no consideration, if they be laid in balance against the crimes of adultery or blasphemy, or oppression. Because these crimes cannot stand with the reputation and sacredness of divine authority; but those others may in most instances very well consist with the ends of government, which are severally provided for in the diversity of sanctions respectively. But if we make our instances to other purposes, we find, that to mutiny in an army, or to keep private assemblies in a monarchy, are worse than a single thought or morose delectation in a fancy of impurity; because those others destroy government

more than these destroy charity of God or obedience. But then though the instances may vary the conclusion, yet the formal reason is alike, and disobedience to man is a disobedience against God for God's authority, and not man's, is imprinted upon the superior; and it is like sacred fire in an earthen censer, as holy as if it were kindled with the fanning of a cherub's wing, or placed just under the propitiatory upon a golden altar; and it is but a gross conceit which cannot distinguish religion from its porter, Isis from the beast that carried it: so that in all disobedience to men, in proportion to the greatness of the matter, or the malice of the person, or his contradiction to the ends of government and combinations of society, we may use the words by which the prophet upbraided Israel, \* *Is it not enough that you are grievous unto men, but will you grieve my God also?* It is a contempt of the divinity, and the affront is transmitted to God himself, when we despise the power which God hath ordained, and all power of every lawful superior is such, the spirit of God being witness in the highest measure, <sup>b</sup> *Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as idolatry.* <sup>c</sup> It is spoken of rebellion against God, and all rebellion is so, for <sup>d</sup> *He that despiseth you despiseth me*, saith the blessed Jesus, that is menace enough in the instance of spiritual regiment. And you are gathered together against the Lord, saith Moses to the rebellious Princes in the conspiracy of Dathan, that is for the temporal. And to encourage this duty, I shall use no other words than those of Achilles, in Homer, <sup>e</sup> "They that obey in this world, are better than they that command in hell.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 7. 13.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. 15. 23.

<sup>c</sup> ἤμῃν δὲ πολλῶν νόμων ἢ καλῶν δούλων κάλλιστον ἑστὸς ἐστὶ, τιμᾶν βασιλείαν, ἢ προσκυθεῖν οὐκ ἐνα θεῷ πάντα σώζοντι. Plutarch in Themist.

<sup>d</sup> Ὃς μάχεται μακάριστον, ἐμῷ βασιλεῖ μέγιστον.

<sup>e</sup> Βελομένην κ' ἐπ' αὐρῇ ἐὼν θηλέεσσι ἀλλῶν ἄνδρ' ἀκλήρῳ ὃ μὴ βιάσθ' ἔπειτα, Ὀδυσσ. λ.

\* Ἡ πλὴν γενέσσι καὶ ἐφ' ἐμείνοισιν ἀνάσσειν,

*A Prayer for the Grace of holy Obedience.*

O LORD and blessed Saviour Jesus, by whose obedience many became righteous, and reparations were made of the ruins brought to human nature by the disobedience of Adam; thou camest into the world with many great and holy purposes concerning our salvation, and hast given us a great precedent of obedience; which that thou mightest preserve to thy heavenly Father, thou didst neglect thy life, and becamest obedient even to the death of the cross; oh, let me imitate so blessed example, and by the merits of thy obedience let me obtain the grace of humility and abnegation of all my own desires in the clearest renunciation of my will; that I may will and refuse in conformity to thy sacred laws and holy purposes, that I may do all thy will cheerfully, choosingly, humbly, confidentially, and continually; and thy will may be done upon me with much mercy and fatherly dispensation of thy providence. Amen.

## ~ II.

LORD let my understanding adhere to, and be satisfied in the excellent wisdom of thy commandments; let my affections dwell in their desires, and all my other faculties be set on daily work for performance of them; and let my love to obey thee make me dutiful to my superiors, upon whom the impresses of thy authority are set by thine own hand; that I may never despise their persons nor refuse their injunctions, nor choose mine own work, nor murmur at their burthens, nor dispute the prudence of the sanction, nor excuse myself, nor pretend difficulties or impossibilities; but that I may be indifferent in my desires, and resigned to the will of those whom thou hast set over me; that since all thy creatures obey thy word, I alone may not disorder the creation, and can-

cel those bonds and intermedial links of subordination whereby my duty should pass to thee and thy glory; but that my obedience being united to thy obedience, I may also have my portion in the glories of thy kingdom, O Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus. Amen.

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### Ad. SECT. V.

#### *Considerations upon the presentation of Jesus in the Temple.*

THE holy Virgin Mother according to the law of Moses, at the expiration of a certain time came to the Temple to be purified, although in her sacred parturition she had contracted no legal impurity; yet she exposed herself to the public opinion and common reputation of an ordinary condition; and still amongst all generations she is in all circumstances accounted blessed, and her reputation no tittle altered, save only that it is made the more sacred by this testimony of her humility. But this we are taught from the consequence of this instance; that if an end principally designed in any duty should be supplied otherwise in any particular person, the duty is nevertheless to be observed; and then the obedience and public order is reason enough for the observation, though the proper end of its designation be wanting in the single person. \* Thus is fasting designed the mortification the flesh, and killing all its unruly appetites, and yet married persons who have another remedy, and a virgin whose temple is hallowed by a gift, and the strict observances of chastity, may be tied to the duty; and if they might not, then fasting were nothing else but a publication of our impure desires, and an exposing the person to the confidence of a bold tempta-

\* Vide Rodriguez in explicat. Bullæ cruciatæ; and Sir Thomas More against Tiudal.



tion, whilst the young men did observe the faster to be tempted from within. But the holy Virgin from these acts (of which insignification she had no need, because she sinned not in the conception, nor was impure in the production) expressed other virtues besides obedience; such as were humble thoughts of herself, devotion and reverence to public sanctions, religion and charity which were like the pure leaves of the whitest lily, fit to represent the beauties of her innocence, but were veiled and shadowed by that sacramental of the Mosaic law.

The holy Virgin received the greatest favour that any of the daughters of Adam ever did, and knowing from whence, and for whose glory she had received it, returns the holy Jesus in a present to God again; for she had nothing so precious as himself to make oblation of; and besides that, every first born among the males was holy to the Lord; this child had an eternal and essential sanctity, and until he came into the world, and was made apt for her to make present of him, there was never in the world any act of adoration proportionable to the honour of the great God; but now there was, and the holy Virgin made it when she presented the holy child Jesus. And now besides that we are taught to return to God whatsoever we have received from him, if we unite our offerings and devotions to this holy present, we shall by the merit and excellency of this oblation exhibit to God an offertory, in which he cannot but delight for the combinations sake and society of his holy Son.

The holy mother brought five sicles, and a pair of turtle doves to redeem the Lamb of God from the anathema; because every first born was to be sacrificed to God, or redeemed if it was clean; it was the poor man's price, and the holy Jesus was never set at the greater prices, when he was estimated upon earth. For he that was Lord of the kingdom chose his portion among the poor of this world, that he might advance the poor to the riches of his inheritance; and

so it was from his nativity hither. For at his birth he was poor, at his circumcision poor, and in the likeness of a sinner; at his presentation poor, and like a sinner and a servant, for he chose to be redeemed with an ignoble price. The five sicles were given to the priest for the redemption of the child; and if the parents were not able he was to be a servant of the temple, and to minister in the inferior offices to the priest; and this was God's seizure and possession of him: for although all the servants of God are his inheritance, yet the ministers of religion who derive their portion of temporals from his title, who live upon the corban, and eat the meat of the altar which is God's peculiar, and come nearer to his holiness by the addresses of an immediate ministration, are God's own upon another and a distinct challenge; but because Christ was to be the Prince of another ministry, and the chief priest of another order, he was redeemed from attending the Mosaic rites, which he came to abolish that he might do his Father's business in establishing the evangelical. Only remember that the ministers of religion are but God's usufructuaries, as they are not lords of God's portion, and therefore must dispense it like stewards, not like masters; so the people are not their patrons in paying, nor they their beneficiaries in receiving tithes or other provisions of maintenance: they owe for it to none but to God himself, and it would also be considered, that in all sacrilegious detentions of ecclesiastical rites, God is the person principally injured,

The turtle doves\* were offered also with the signification of another mystery. In the sacred rites of marriage, although the permissions of natural desires are such as are most ordinate to their ends, the avoiding fornication, the alleviation of æconomical cares and vexations, and the production of children, and mutual comfort and support; yet the apertures and permis-

\* Sed pudicitia illis prima, & neutri nota adulteria conjugii fidem non violant. *Plin. l. 10. c. 33.*

sions of marriage have such restraints of modesty and prudence, that all transgression of the just order to such ends is a crime; and besides these, there may be degrees of inordination or obliquity of intention, or too sensual complacency or unhandsome preparations of mind or unsacramental thoughts; in which particulars, because we have no determined rule but prudence, and the analogy of the rite and the severity of our religion, which allow in some cases more, in some less, and always uncertain latitudes; for aught we know there may be lighter transgressions, something that we know not of; and for these at the purification of the woman it is supposed the offering was made, and the turtures, by being an oblation, did deprecate a supposed irregularity; but by being a chaste and marital emblem, they professed the obliquity (if any were) was within the protection of the sacred bands of marriage; and therefore so excusable as to be expiated by a cheap offering; and what they did in hieroglyphic, christians must do in the exposition; be strict observers of the main rites and principal obligations; and not neglectful to deprecate the lesser unhandsomnesses of the too sensual applications.

God had at that instant so ordered that for great ends of his own and theirs, two very holy persons, of divers sexes and like piety, Simeon and Anna, the one who lived an active and secular, the other a retired and contemplative life, should come into the Temple by revelation and direction of the holy spirit and see him whom they and all the world did look for, the Lord's Christ, the consolation of Israel. They saw him, they rejoiced, they worshipped, they prophesied, they sang hymns; and old Simeon did comprehend and circumscribe in his arms him that filled all the world, and was then so satisfied that he desired to live no longer; God had verified his promise, had shewn him the Messias, had filled his heart with joy, and made his old age honourable: and now after all

this sight. no object could be pleasant but the joys of paradise; for as a man who hath stared too freely upon the face and beauties of the sun, is blind and dark to objects of a less splendour, and is forced to shut his eyes, that he may through the degrees of darkness perceive the inferior beauties of more proportioned objects: so was old Simeon, his eyes were so filled with the glories of this revelation, that he was willing to close them in his last night; that he might be brought into the communications of eternity; and he could never more find comfort in any other object this world could minister; ~~X~~for such is the excellency of spiritual things when they have once filled the corners of our hearts, and made us highly sensible and apprehensive of interior beauties of God and of religion, all things of this world are flat and empty and unsatisfying vanities, as unpleasant as the lees of vinegar to a tongue filled with the spirit of high Italic wines. And until we are so dead to the world as to apprehend no gust or freer complacency in exterior objects, we never have entertained Christ, or have had our cups overflow with devotion, or are filled with the spirit. When our chalice is filled with holy oil, with the anointing from above, it will entertain none of the waters of bitterness, or if it does they are thrust to the bottom, they are the lowest of our desires, and therefore only admitted because they are natural and constituent.

The good old prophetess Anna, had lived long in chaste widowhood, in the service of the Temple, in the continual offices of devotion, in fasting and prayer; and now came the happy instant in which God would give her a great benediction and an earnest of a greater: the returns of prayer and the blessings of piety are certain; and though not dispensed according to the expectancies of our narrow conceptions, yet shall they so come, at such times and in such measures as shall crown the piety, and satisfy the desires, and reward the expectation. It was in the Temple, the

same place where she had for so many years poured out her heart to God, that God poured forth his heart to her, sent his Son from his bosom, and there she received his benediction; indeed in such places God does most particularly exhibit himself, and blessing goes along with him wherever he goes; in holy places God hath put his holy name, and to holy persons God does oftentimes manifest the interior and more secret glories of his holiness; provided they come thither as old Simeon and Anna did, by the motions of the holy Spirit, not with designs of vanity, or curiosity, or sensuality; for such spirits as those come to profane and desecrate the house, and unhallow the person, and provoke the Deity of the place, and blast us with unwholesome airs.

But Joseph and Mary wondered at these things which were spoken, and treasured them in their hearts, and they became matter of devotion, and mental prayer or meditation.

#### THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL God, who by the inspirations of thy holy Spirit didst direct thy servants Simeon and Anna to the Temple at the instant of the presentation of the holy child Jesus, that so thou mightest verify thy promise and manifest thy Son, and reward the piety of holy people, who longed for redemption by the coming of the Messias; give me the perpetual assistance of the same spirit to be as a monitor and a guide to me, leading me to all holy actions, and to the embracements and possessions of thy glorious Son; and remember all thy faithful people who wait for the consolation and redemption of the church from all her miseries and persecutions, and at last satisfy their desires by the revelations of thy mercies and salvation. Thou hast advanced thy holy child and set him up for a sign of thy mercies, and a representation of thy glories. Lord let no act, or thought, or word

of mine ever be in contradiction to this blessed sign, but let it be for the ruin of all my vices, and all the powers the devil employs against the church, and for the raising up all those virtues and graces which thou didst design me in the purposes of eternity; but let my portion never be amongst the incredulous, or the scornful, or the heretical, or the profane, or any of those who stumble at this stone which thou hast laid for the foundation of thy church, and the structures of a virtuous life; remember me with much mercy and compassion when the sword of sorrows or afflictions shall pierce my heart: first transfix me with love, and then all the troubles of this world will be consignations to the joys of a better; which grant for the mercies and the name sake of thy holy child Jesus. Amen.

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### DISCOURSE III.

#### *Of Meditation.*

IF in the definition of Meditation I should call it an unaccustomed and unpractised duty, I should speak a truth, though somewhat inartificially: for not only the interior beauties and brighter excellencies are as unfelt as ideas and abstractions are, but also the practise and common knowledge of the duty itself are strangers to us, like the retirements of the deep, or the undiscovered treasures of the Indian hills. And this is a very great cause of the dryness and expiration of men's devotion, because our souls are so little refreshed with the waters and holy dews of meditation. We go to our prayers by chance, or order, or by determination of accidental occurrences; and we recite them as we read a book; and sometimes we are sensible of the duty, and a flash of lightning makes the room bright, and our prayers end and

the lightning is gone, and we as dark as ever. We draw our water from standing pools, which never are filled but with sudden showers, and therefore we are dry so often. Whereas if we would draw water from the fountains of our Saviour, and derive them through the channel of diligent and prudent meditations, our devotion would be a continual current, and safe against the barrenness of frequent droughts.

✱ For meditation is an attention and application of spirit to divine things; a searching out all instruments to a holy life; a devout consideration of them, and a production of those affections which are in a direct order to the love of God, and a pious conversation. Indeed meditation is all that great instrument of piety whereby it is made prudent and reasonable, and orderly, and perpetual. For supposing our memory instructed with the knowledge of such mysteries, and revelations that are apt to entertain the spirit, the understanding is first and best employed in the consideration of them, and then the will in their reception, when they are duly prepared and so transmitted; and both these in such manner, and to such purposes, that they become the magazine and great repositories of grace, and instrumental to all designs of virtue.

For the understanding is not to consider the matter of any meditation in itself, or as it determines in natural excellencies or unworthiness respectively, or with a purpose to furnish itself with notion and riches of knowledge; for that is like the winter sun, it shines but warms not: but in such order as themselves are put in the designations of theology, in the order of divine laws, in their spiritual capacity, and as they have influence upon holiness; for the understanding here is something else besides the intellectual power of the soul, it is the spirit, that is, it is celestial in its application, as it is spiritual in its nature, and we may understand it well by considering the beatifical portions of soul and body in their future

glories. For therefore even our bodies in the resurrection shall be spiritual, because the operation of them shall be in order to spiritual glories, and their natural actions (such as are seeing and speaking) shall have a spiritual object and supernatural end; and here as we partake of such excellencies and co-operate to such purposes, men are more or less spiritual; and so is the understanding taken from its first and lowest ends of resting in notion and ineffective contemplation, and is made spirit (that is) wholly ruled and guided by God's spirit to supernatural ends and spiritual employments; so that it understands and considers the motions of the heavens to declare the glory of God, the prodigies and alterations in the firmament to demonstrate his handy work; it considers the excellent order of creatures, that we may not disturb the order of creation, or dissolve the golden chain of subordination: Aristotle and Porphyry, and the other Greek philosophers studied the heavens to search out their natural causes and production of bodies; the wiser Chaldees and Assyrians studied the same things, that they might learn their influences upon us and make predictions of contingencies; the more moral Egyptian described his theorems in hieroglyphics and phantastic representations, to teach principles of policy, economy, and other prudences of morality and secular negotiation: but the same philosophy when it is made Christian, considers as they did, but to greater purposes, even that from the book of the creatures we may glorify the Creator, and hence derive arguments of worship and religion; this is Christian philosophy.

I instance only in considerations natural to spiritual purposes; but the same is the manner in all meditation, whether the matter of it be nature or revelation; for if we think of hell and consider the infinity of its duration; and that its flames last as long as God lasts, and thence conjecture upon the rules of proportion, why a finite creature may have an infinite unnatural



duration; or think by what ways a material fire can torment an immaterial substance; or why the devils, who are intelligent and wise creatures, should be so foolish as to hate God from whom they know every rivulet of amability derives? This is to study, not to meditate: for meditation considers any thing that may best make us to avoid the place, and to quit a vicious habit, or master and rectify an untoward inclination, or purchase a virtue, or exercise one, so that meditation is an act of the understanding put to the right use.

For the holy Jesus, coming to redeem us from the bottomless pit, did it by lifting us up out of the puddles of impurity and the unwholesome waters of vanity; *He redeemed us from our vain conversation*; and our understandings had so many vanities, that they were made instruments of great impiety. The unlearned and ruder nations had fewer virtues, but they had also fewer vices than the wise empires, that ruled the world with violence and wit together, The softer <sup>a</sup> Asians had lust and intemperance in a full chalice; but their understandings were ruder than the finer Latins, for these men's understandings distilled wickedness, as through a limbeck, and the Romans drank spirits and the sublime quintescencies of villainy, whereas the other made themselves drunk with the lees and cheaper instances of sin: so that the understanding is not an idle and useless faculty, but naturally drives to practise, and brings guests into the inward cabinet of the will, and there they are entertained and feasted. And those understandings which did not serve the baser end of vices, yet were unprofitable for the most part, and furnished their inward rooms with glasses, and beads, and trifles, fit for an American mart. From all these impurities and vanities Jesus hath redeemed all his disciples, and not only

<sup>a</sup> Τὰς Περσῶν βασιλεῖς ὑπὸ τρυφῆς ἀποκρηρῦνται τοῖς ἐφουρίσμοσι τῆς κακῆς ἡδονῆς ἀφ' οὗ καὶ πολλοί. *Athen. l. 4.*

thrown out of his temples all the impure rites of Flora and Cybele, but also the trifling and unprofitable ceremonies of the more sober deities, not only vices but useless and unprofitable speculations, and hath consecrated our head into a temple, our understanding to spirit, our reason to religion, our study to meditation: and this is the first part of the sanctification of our spirit.

And this was the cause holy scripture commands the duty of meditation in proportion still to the excellencies of piety and a holy life, to which it is highly and aptly instrumental. <sup>a</sup> *Blessed is the man that meditates in the law of the Lord day and night.* And the reason of the proposition and the use of the duty is expressed to this purpose: <sup>b</sup> *Thy words have I hid in my heart, that I should not sin against thee.* The placing and fixing those divine considerations in our understandings and hiding them there, are designs of high Christian prudence, that they with advantage may come forth in the expresses of a holy life. For what in the world is more apt and natural to produce humility, than to meditate upon the low stoopings and descents of the holy Jesus, to the nature of a man, to the weaknesses of a child, to the poverties of a stable, to the ignobleness of a servant, to the shame of the cross, to the pains of cruelty, to the dust of death, to the title of a sinner, and to the wrath of God? By this instance poverty is made honourable, and humility is sanctified and made noble, and the contradictions of nature are amiable and fitted for a wise election. Thus hatred of sin, shame of ourselves, confusion at the sense of human misery, the love of God, confidence in his promises, desires of heaven, holy resolutions, resignation of our own appetites, conformity to divine will, oblations of ourselves, repentance and mortification are the proper emanations from meditation of the sordidness of sin, our proneness to it, our daily mi-

<sup>a</sup> Psal. I.<sup>b</sup> Psal. 119. 11.

series as issues of divine vengeance, the glories of God, his infinite unalterable veracity, the satisfactions in the vision of God, the rewards of piety, the rectitude of the laws of God, and perfection of his sanctions, God's supreme and paternal dominion, and his certain malediction of sinners; and when any one of these considerations is taken to pieces, and so placed in the rooms of application, that a piece of duty is conjoined to a piece of the mystery; and the whole office to the purchase of a grace, or the extermination of a vice, it is like opening our windows to let in the sun and the wind; and holiness is as proportioned an effect to this practice, as glory is to a persevering holiness, by way of reward and moral causality.

For all the affections that are in man are either natural or by chance, or by the incitation of reason and discourse; our natural affections are not worthy the entertainments of a Christian; they must be supernatural and divine that put us into the hopes of perfection and felicities; and these other that are good, unless they come by meditation, they are but accidental, and set with the evening sun: but if they be produced upon the strengths of pious meditation, they are as perpetual as they are reasonable, and excellent in proportion to the piety of the principle. A garden that is watered with short and sudden showers is more uncertain in its fruits and beauties, than if a rivulet waters it with a perpetual distilling and constant humectation: and just such are the short emissions and unpremeditated resolutions of piety begotten by a dash of holy rain from heaven, whereby God sometimes uses to call the careless, but to taste what excellencies of piety they neglect; but if they be not produced by the reason of religion and the philosophy of meditation, they have but the life of a fly or a tall gourd; they come into the world only to say they had a being, you could scarce know their length, but by measuring the ground they cover in their fall.

For since we are more moved by material and sensible objects, than by things merely speculative and intellectual, and generals even in spiritual things are less perceived, and less motive than particulars: Meditation frames the understanding part of religion to the proportions of our nature, and our weakness; by making some things more circumstantiate, and material, and the more spiritual to be particular, and therefore the more applicable; and the mystery is made like the gospel to the apostles, *Our eyes do see, and our ears do hear, and our hands do handle thus much of the word of life* as is prepared for us in the meditation.

1. And therefore every wise person, that intends to furnish himself with affections of religion, or detestation against a vice, or glorifications of a mystery, still will proportion the mystery, and fit it with such circumstances of fancy and application, as by observation of himself he knows aptest to make impression. It was a wise design of Mark Antony when he would stir up the people to revenge the death of Caesar, he brought his body to the pleading place, he shewed his wounds, held up the rent mantle, and shewed them the garment that he put on that night in which he beat the Nervii, that is, in which he won a victory, for which his memory was dear to them. He shewed them that wound which pierced his heart, in which they were placed by so dear a love, that he made them his heirs, and left to their public use places of delight and pleasure; and then it was natural when he had made those things present to them which had once moved their love and his honour, that grief at the loss of so honourable and so loved a person should succeed; and then they were lords of all, their sorrow and revenge seldom slept in two beds. And thus holy meditation produces the passions and desires it intends, it makes the object present and almost sensible, it renews the first passions by a fiction of imagination, it passes from the paschal parlour to Cedron, it tells the drops

of sweat, and measures them and finds them as big as drops of blood, and then conjectures at the greatness of our sins; it fears in the midst of Christ's agonies, it hears his groans, it spies Judas's lanthorn afar off, it follows Jesus to Gabbatha, and wonders at his innocence and their malice, and feels the strokes of the whip, and shrinks the head when the crown of thorns is thrust hard upon his holy brows, and at last goes step by step with Jesus, and carries part of the cross, and is nailed fast with sorrow and compassion, and dies with love. For if the soul be principal of its own actions, it can produce the same effects by reflex acts of the understanding, when it is assisted by the imaginative part as when it sees the thing acted: only let the meditation be as minute, particular, and circumstantiate as it may; for a widow by representing the caresses of her dead husband's love produces sorrow and the new affections of a sad endearment. It is too sure, that the recalling the circumstances of a past impurity does re-ignite the flame and entertain the fancy with the burnings of an impure fire: and this happens not by any advantages of vice, but by the nature of the thing, and the efficacy of circumstances. So does holy meditation produce those impresses and signatures, which are the proper effects of the mystery, if presented in a right line and direct representation.

2. He that means to meditate in the best order to the productions of piety, must not be inquisitive for the highest mysteries, but the plainest propositions are to him of the greatest use and evidence. For meditation is the duty of all, and therefore God hath fitted such matter for it, which is proportioned to every understanding, and the greatest mysteries of Christianity are plainest, and yet most fruitful of meditation, and most useful to the production of piety. High speculations are as barren as the tops of cedars; but the fundamentals of Christianity are fruitful as the vallies or the creeping vine. For know, that it is no

meditation, but it may be an illusion, when you consider mysteries to become more learned, without thoughts of improving piety. Let your affections be as high as they can climb towards God, so your considerations be humble, fruitful, and practically mysterious. *Oh that I had the wings of a dove, that I might flee away and be at rest*, said David. The wings of an eagle would have carried him higher, but yet the innocent dove did furnish him with the better emblem to represent his humble design; and lower meditations might sooner bring him to rest in God. It was a saying of Ægidius, that an old and a simple woman, if she loves Jesus, may be greater than was brother Bonaventure. Want of learning and disability to consider great secrets of theology does not at all retard our progress to spiritual perfections; love to Jesus may be better promoted by the plainer understandings of honest and unlettered people, than by the finer and more exalted speculations of great clerks, that have less devotion. For although the way of serving God by the understanding be the best and most lasting, yet it is not necessary the understanding should be dressed with troublesome and laborious notions; the reason that is in religion is the surest principle to engage our services, and more perpetual than the sweetnesses and the motives of affection, but every honest man's understanding is then best furnished with the discourses and the reasonable parts of religion, when he knows those mysteries of religion, upon which Christ and his apostles did build a holy life and the superstructures of piety; those are the best materials of his meditation.

So that *meditation is nothing else but the using of all those arguments, motives and irradiations which God intended to be instrumental to piety*. It is a composition of both ways; for it stirs up our affections by reason and the way of understanding, that the wise soul may be satisfied in the reasonableness of the thing, and the affectionate may be entertained with

the sweetness of holy passion; that our judgment be determined by discourse, and our appetites made active by the caresses of a religious fancy. And therefore the use of meditation is to consider any of the mysteries of religion with purposes to draw from it rules of life, or affections to virtue, or detestation of vice; and from hence the man rises to devotion and mental prayer, and intercourse with God; and after that he rests himself in the bosom of beatitude, and is swallowed up with the comprehensions of love and contemplation. These are the several degrees of meditation; but let us first understand that part of it which is duty, and then if any thing succeed of a middle condition between duty and reward, we will consider also how that duty is to be performed, and how the reward is to be managed, that it may prove to be no illusion; therefore I add also this consideration.

3. Whatsoever pious purposes and deliberations are entertained in the act of meditation, they are carefully to be maintained and thrust forward to actual performances, although they were indefinite and indeterminate, and no other ways decreed but by resolutions and determinations of reason and judgment. For God assists every pious action according to its exigence and capacity, and therefore blesses holy meditations with results of reason, and prepossessions dogmatically decreeing the necessity of virtue, and the convenience of certain exercises in order to the purchase of it: he then that neglects to actuate such discourses, loses the benefit of his meditation; he is gone no further than when he first set out, and neglects the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. For if at any time it be certain what spirit it is that speaks within the soul, it is most certain that it is the good spirit that moves us to an act of virtue in order to acquisition of the habit; and when God's grace hath assisted us so far in our meditation, that we understand our duty and are moved with present argu-

ments, if we put not forth our hand and make use of them, we do nothing towards our duty; and it is not certain that God will create graces in us as he does the soul; let every pious person think every conclusion of reason in his meditation to have passed an obligation upon him; and if he hath decreed that fasting so often, and doing so many religious acts is convenient and conducing to the production of a grace he is in pursuit of; let him know that every such degree, and reasonable proposition is the grace of God, instrumental to piety, part of his assistance, and therefore in no case to be extinguished.

4. In meditation, let the understanding be restrained, and under such prudent coercion and confinement that it wander not from one discourse to another, till it hath perceived some fruit from the first: either that his soul be instructed in a duty, or moved by a new argument, or confirmed in an old, or determined to some exercise and intermedial action of religion, or hath broke out into some prayers and intercourse with God in order to the production of a virtue. And this is the mysticall design of the spouse in the canticles of Solomon, *“I adjure you, O you daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up nor awake my love till he please.”* For it is lightness of spirit to pass over a field of flowers, and to fix no where, but to leave it without carrying some honey with us; unless the subject be of itself barren and unfruitful, and then why was it chosen? Or that it is made so by our indisposition, and then indeed it is to be quitted: but (it is S. Chrysostom's simile) as a lamb sucking the breast of its dam and mother moves the head from one part to another, till it hath found a distilling fontinel; and then it fixes till it be satisfied, or the fountain cease dropping: so should we in meditation reject such materials as are barren like the tops of hills, and fix upon such



thoughts which nourish and refresh, and there dwell till the nourishment be drawn forth, or so much of it as we can then temperately digest.

5. In meditation, strive rather for graces than for gifts, for affections in the way of virtue more than the overflowings of sensible devotion; and therefore if thou findest any thing by which thou mayest be better, though thy spirit do not actually rejoice or find any gust or relish in the manducation, yet chuse it greedily; for although the chief end of meditation be affection, and not determinations intellectual; yet there is choice to be had of the affections, and care must be taken that the affections be desires of virtue, or repudiations and aversions from something criminal; not joys and transportations spiritual, comforts and complacencies; for they are no part of our duty; sometimes they are encouragements, and sometimes rewards, sometimes they depend upon habitude and disposition of body, and seem great matters when they have little in them; and are more bodily than spiritual, like the gift of tears, and yearning of the bowels; and sometimes they are illusions and temptations, at which if the soul stoops and be greedy after, they may prove like Hippomane's golden apples to Atalanta; retard our course, and possibly do some hazard to the whole race. And this will be nearer reduced to practice, if we consider the variety of matter, which is fitted to the meditation in several states of men travelling towards heaven.

For the first beginners in religion are employed in the mastering of their first appetites, casting out their devils, exterminating all evil customs, lessening the proclivity of habits, and countermanding the too great forwardness of vicious inclinations; and this, which divines call the purgative way, is wholly spent in actions of repentance, mortification, and self-denial; and therefore if a penitent person snatches at comforts, or the tastes of sensible devotion, his repentance is too delicate, it is but a rod of roses and jessamine.

If God sees the spirit broken all in pieces, and that it needs a little of the oil of gladness for its support and restitution to the capacities of its duty, he will give it, but this is not to be designed, nor snatched at in the meditation; tears of joy are not good expressions, nor instruments of repentance; we must not gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles; no refreshments to be looked for here, but such only as are necessary for support; and when God sees they are, let not us trouble ourselves, he will provide them. But the meditations which are prompt to this purgative way and practice of first beginners, is not apt to produce delicacies, but in the sequel and consequent of it. Afterwards it brings forth the pleasant fruit of righteousness, but for the present it hath no joy in it, no joy of sense though much satisfaction to reason. And such are meditations of the fall of angels and man, the ejection of them from heaven, of our parents from paradise, the horror and obliquity of sin, the wrath of God, the severity of his anger, mortification of our body and spirit, self-denial, the cross of Christ, death, and hell, and judgment; the terrors of an evil conscience, the insecurities of a sinner, the unreasonableness of sin, the troubles of repentance, the worm and sting of a burdened spirit, the difficulties of rooting out evil habits, and the utter abolition of sin; if these nettles bear honey, we may fill ourselves; but such sweetnesses spoil the operations of these bitter potions. Here therefore let your addresses to God and your mental prayers be affectionate desires of pardon, humble considerations of ourselves, thoughts of revenge against our crimes, designs of mortification, indefatigable solicitations for mercy, expresses of shame and confusion of face; and he meditates best in the purgative way that makes these affections most operative and high.

After our first step is taken, and the punitive part of repentance is resolved on, and begun, and put forward into good degrees of progress, we then enter

into the illuminative way of religion; and set upon the acquist of virtues and the purchase of spiritual graces; and therefore our meditations are to be proportioned to the design of that employment, such as are considerations of the life of Jesus, examples of saints, reasons of virtue, means of acquiring them, designations of proper exercises to every pious habit, the eight beatitudes, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost, the promises of the gospel, the attributes of God as they are revealed to represent God to be infinite and to make us religious, the rewards of heaven, excellent and select sentences of holy persons, to be as incentives of piety; these are the proper matter for proficients in religion; but then the affections producible from these are love of virtue, desires to imitate the holy Jesus, affections to saints and holy persons, conformity of choice, subordination to God's will, election of the ways of virtue, satisfaction of the understanding in the ways of religion, and resolutions to pursue them in the midst of all discomforts and persecutions; and our mental prayers or intercourse with God, which are the present emanations of our meditations, must be in order to these affections, and productions from those, and in all these yet, there is safety and piety and no seeking of ourselves, but designs of virtue in just reason and duty to God, and for his sake, that is, for his commandment. And in all these particulars, if there be such a sterility of spirit that there be no end served but of spiritual profit, we are never the worse; all that God requires of us, is, that we will live well and repent in just measure and right manner, and he that doth so, hath meditated well.

From hence if a pious soul passes to affections of greater sublimity, and intimate and more immediate, abstracted and immaterial love, it is well, only remember that the love God requires of us, is an operative, material and communicative love; *if ye love me, keep my commandments*; so that still a good life

is the effect of the sublimest meditation: and if we make our duty sure behind us, ascend up as high into the mountain as you can, so your ascent may consist with the securities of your person, the condition of infirmity, and the interests of your duty. According to the saying of <sup>a</sup> Ildefonsus; “ Our empty saying lauds and reciting verses in honour of his name, please not God so well, as the imitation of him does advantage to us; and a devout imitator pleases the spouse better than an idle panegyric;” let your work be like his, your duty in imitation of his precept and example, and then sing praises as you list; no heart is large enough, no voice pleasant enough, no lifelong enough, nothing but an eternity of duration, and a beatifical state can do it well; and therefore holy David joins them both; <sup>b</sup> *Whoso offereth me thanks and praise, he honoureth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright I will shew the salvation of God.* All thanks and praise without a right ordered conversation are but the echo of religion, a voice and no substance; but if those praises be sung by a heart righteous and obedient, that is singing with the spirit, and singing with understanding; that is the music God delights in.

6. But let me observe and press this caution: it is a mistake, and not a little dangerous, when people religious and forward shall too promptly, frequently and nearly spend their thoughts in consideration of divine excellencies. God hath shewn thee merit enough to spend all thy stock of love upon him in the characters of his power, the book of the creature, the great tables of his mercy, and the lines of his justice; we have cause enough to praise his excellencies in what we feel of him, and are refreshed with

<sup>a</sup> Serm 1. de assumpt. Καὶ ἡ τῶν προσφερόντων πολυτέλεια, τιμὴ εἰς Θεὸν ὃ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τῷ ἰνδύει φρονήματι<sup>β</sup> προστάγεται· δῶρα γὰρ ἢ σπουδαίαι ἀφρόνῳ πύρι<sup>β</sup> τροφή ἢ ἀναθήματα ἱεροσύλοις χροηγία<sup>β</sup> τὸ δὲ ἰνδύει φρόνημα διακρῶς ἡδρασμένον συνάπτει εἰπῶ. Hierock.

<sup>b</sup> Psal. 50. 23

his influence, and see his beauties in reflection, though we do not put our eyes out, with staring upon his face. To behold the glories and perfections of God with a more direct intuition is the privilege of angels, who yet cover their faces in the brightness of his presence; it is only permitted to us to consider the back parts of God; and therefore those speculations are too bold and imprudent addresses, and minister to danger more than to religion, when we pass away from the direct studies of virtue and those thoughts of God, which are the freer and safer communications of the Deity, which are the means of intercourse and relation between him and us, to those considerations concerning God which are metaphysical and remote, the formal objects of adoration and wonder, rather than of virtue and temperate discourses; for God in scripture never revealed any of his abstracted perfections and remoter and mysterious distances, but with a purpose to produce fear in us, and therefore to chide the temerity and boldness of too familiar and nearer intercourse.

True it is that every thing we see or can consider represents some perfections of God; but this I mean, that no man should consider too much, and meditate too frequently upon the immediate perfections of God, as it were by way of intuition, but as they are manifested in the creatures and in the ministeries of virtue; and also whenever God's perfections be the matter of meditation, we should not ascend upwards into him, but descend upon ourselves like fruitful vapours drawn up into a cloud, descending speedily into a shower, that the effect of the consideration be a design of good life; and that our loves to God be not spent in abstractions, but in good works and humble obedience. The other kind of love may deceive us; and therefore so may such kind of considerations which are its instrument. But this I am now more particularly to consider.

For beyond this I have described, there is a degree of meditation so exalted, that it changes the very name, and is called contemplation, and it is in the unitive way of religion: that is, it consists in unions and adherencies to God; it is a prayer of quietness and silence, and a meditation extraordinary, a discourse without variety, a vision and intuition of divine excellencies, and immediate entry into an orb of light, and a resolution of all our faculties into sweetnesses, affections and starings upon the divine beauty; and is carried on to extasies, raptures, suspensions, elevations, abstractions, and apprehensions beatifical. In all the course of virtuous meditation, the soul is like a virgin invited to make a matrimonial contract, it enquires the condition of the person, his estate and disposition, and other circumstances of amability and desire. But when she is satisfied with these enquiries, and hath chosen her husband, she no more considers particulars, but is moved by his voice, and his gesture, and runs to his entertainment and fruition, and spends herself wholly in affections, not to obtain but enjoy his love.

Thus it is said.

But this is a thing not to be discoursed of, but felt; and although in other sciences the terms must first be known, and then the rules, and conclusions scientificall; here it is otherwise: for first the whole experience of this must be obtained, before we can so much as know what it is, and the end must be acquired first; the conclusion before the premises. They that pretend to these heights call them the secrets of the kingdom, but they are such which no man can describe, such which God hath not revealed in the publication of the gospel, such for the acquiring of which there are no means prescribed, and to which no man is obliged, and which are not in any man's power to obtain, nor such which it is lawful to pray for or desire, nor concerning which we shall ever be called to an account.

Indeed when persons have been long softened with the continual droppings of religion, and their spirits made timorous and apt for impression by the assiduity of prayer and perpetual alarms of death, and the continual dyings of mortification; the fancy which is a very great instrument of devotion, is kept continually warm and in a disposition and aptitude to take fire and to flame out in great ascents; and when they suffer transportations beyond the burthens and support of reason, they suffer they know not what, and call it what they please, and other pious people that hear talk of it, admire that devotion which is so eminent and beatified (for so they esteem it) and so they come to be called raptures and extasies; which even amongst the apostles were so seldom that they were never spoke of; for those visions, raptures, and intuitions of St. Steven, St. Paul, St. Peter, <sup>a</sup> and St. John were not pretended to be of this kind; not excesses of religion, but prophetic and intuitive revelations to great and significant purposes, such as may be and are described in story; but these other cannot; for so Cassian reports and commends a saying of Antony the Hermit; “That is not a perfect prayer in which the votary does either understand himself or the prayer,” meaning that persons eminently religious were *diviner patientes*, as Dionysius Areopagite said of his master Hierotheus, <sup>b</sup> pathics in devotion, suffering ravishments of senses, transported beyond the uses of humanity into the suburbs of beatifical

<sup>a</sup> Act. 10. 10. *ἐπίκεινεν ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἱεράσις*, and cap. 11. 5. *ὃ ἶδον ἐν ἱεράσει ὄραμα*.  
Raptus vidit visionem dum oraverat.

————— Mentemq; priorem  
Expulit, atque hominem toto sibi cedere jussit  
Pectore quod be Appolline dixit Lucanus.

¶ Qualis erat visio sive extasis Balaam qui visionem omnipotentis vidit, excidens, sed reiectis oculis. Num. 24, 4, 16.

<sup>b</sup> Μανίας δὲ γε εἴδη δύο. ἡ μὲν ὑπόνοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων, ἥδη ὑπὸ θείας ἐξ ἀλλοπαῆς. Plato in Phaed. Γῆς δὲ θείας τέλει τὰς θεῶν μέρη διελκομένοι, μαντικὴν μὲν ἐπιποιοῦν ἀπόλλωνος. Σεντες διονύσου δὲ τελεστικὴν, μυσῶν τ’ ἀν ποιητικὴν τέλει τὴν ἑρμῆος. &c. ib. d. ἔχοντες ἂν ἐν περὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἐν ὀλίγῳ τῦτο· ὅτι ὁ σοφία ποιοῖεν ἀποιοῖεν, ἀλλὰ φύσει τινί, ὃ ἐνδυσιάζονται, ὃ εἰ χρησμοδοί. ὃ γὰρ ἄπο λίγυσι μὲν πολλὰ, ἴσασι δὲ ὕδιν ἂν λέγουσι. Plato in Apol.

apprehensions; but whether or no this be any thing else besides a too intense and indiscreet pressure of the faculties of the soul to inconveniences of understanding, or else a credulous, busy, and untamed fancy, they that think best of it cannot give a certainty. There are and have been some religious who have acted madness, and pretended inspirations; and when these are destitute of a prophetic spirit, if they resolve to serve themselves upon the pretences of it, they are disposed to the imitation, if not, to the sufferings of madness, and it would be a great folly to call such *Dei plenos*, full of God, who are no better than phantastic and mad people.

This we are assured of, that many illusions have come in the likeness of visions; and absurd fancies under the pretence of raptures; and what some have called the spirit of prophecy, hath been the spirit of lying; and contemplation hath been nothing but melancholy and unnatural lengths; and stillness of prayer hath been a meer dream and hypochondriacal devotion, and hath ended in pride or despair, or some sottish and dangerous temptation. It is reported of Heron the Monk, that having lived a retired, mortified, and religious life for many years together, at last he came to that habit of austerity, or singularity, that he refused the festival refection and freer meals of Easter and other solemnities, that he might do more eminently than the rest, and spend his time in greater abstractions and contemplations; but the devil taking advantage of the weakness of his melancholy and unsettled spirit, gave him a transportation and an extasy in which he fancied himself to have attained so great perfection, that he was as dear to God as a crowned martyr, and angels would be his security for indemnity, though he threw himself to the bottom of a well; he obeyed his fancy and temptation, did so, bruised himself to death, and died possessed with a persuasion of the verity of that extasy and transportation.



I will not say that all violencies and extravagancies of a religious fancy are illusions, but I say that they are all unnatural, not hallowed by the warrant of a revelation, nothing reasonable, nothing secure; I am not sure that they ever consist with humility, but it is confessed that they are often produced by self love, arrogancy, and the great opinion others have of us: I will not judge the condition of those persons who are said to have suffered these extraordinaries, for I know not the circumstances, or causes, or attendants, or the effects; or whether the stories be true that make report of them; but I shall only advise that we follow the intimation of our blessed Saviour, *that we sit down in the lowest place till the master of the feast come and bids us sit up higher*. If we entertain the inward man in the purgative and illuminative way, that is, in actions of repentance, virtue, and precise duty, that is the surest way of uniting us to God, whilst it is done by faith and obedience, and that also is love; and in these peace and safety dwell: and after we have done our work it is not discretion in a servant to hasten to his meal and snatch at the refreshment of visions, unions, and abstractions, but first we must gird ourselves and wait upon the master, and not sit down ourselves till we all be called at the great supper of the Lamb.

It was therefore an excellent desire of St. Bernard, who was as likely as any to have such altitudes of speculation if God had really dispensed them to persons holy, phantastic, and religious, "I pray God grant to me peace of spirit, joy in the holy Ghost, to compassionate others in the midst of my mirth, to be charitable in simplicity, to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to mourn with them that mourn, and with these I shall be content: other exaltations of devotion I leave to apostles and apostolic men; the high hills are for the harts and the climbing goats, the stony rocks and the recesses of the earth for the conies." It is more healthful and nutritive to dig the

earth and to eat of her fruits, than to stare upon the greatest glories of the heavens, and to live upon the beams of the sun; so unsatisfying a thing is rapture and transportation to the soul; it often distracts the faculties, but seldom does advantage piety, and is full of danger in the greatest of its lustre. If ever a man be more in love with God by such instruments, or more endeared to virtue, or made more severe and watchful in his repentance, it is an excellent grace and gift of God, but then this is nothing but the joys and comfort of ordinary meditation; those extraordinary, as they have no sense in them, so are not pretended to be instruments of virtue; but are like Jonathan's arrows, shot beyond it, to signify the danger the man is in towards whom such arrows are shot; but if the person be made unquiet, unconstant, proud, pusillanimous, of high opinion, pertinacious and confident in uncertain judgments, or desperate, it is certain they are temptations and illusions; so that as all our duty consists in the ways of repentance and acquist of virtue; so there rests all our safety, and by consequence all our solid joys; and this is the effect of ordinary, pious, and regular meditations.

If I mistake not, there is a temptation like this under another name amongst persons whose religion hath less discourse and more fancy, and that is, a familiarity with God; which indeed if it were rightly understood, is an affection consequent to the illuminative way, that is, an act, or an effect of the virtue of religion and devotion, which consists in prayers and addresses to God, lauds and eucharists, and hymns, and confidence of coming to the throne of grace, upon assurance of God's veracity and goodness infinite: so that familiarity with God, which is an affection of friendship, is the intercourse of giving and receiving blessings and graces respectively; and it is produced by a holy life, or the being in the state of grace, and is part of every man's inheritance that is a friend of God. But when familiarity with God shall be esteem-

ed a privilege of singular and eminent persons, not communicated to all the faithful, and is thought to be an admission to a nearer intercourse of secrecy with God, it is an effect of pride and a mistake in judgment concerning the very same thing which the old divines call the unitive way, if themselves that claim it understood the terms of art, and the consequences of their own intentions.

Only I shall observe one circumstance, that familiarity with God is nothing else but an admission to be of God's family, the admission of a servant or a son in minority, and implies obedience, duty, and fear on our parts; care, and providence, and love on God's part. And it is not the familiarity of sons, but the impudence of proud equals to express this pretended privilege in even unmannerly and unreverant addresses and discourses; and it is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union, or familiarity any man pretends to, it is of the devil, unless the greater the pretence be, the greater also be the humility of the man. The highest flames are the most tremulous; and so are the most holy and eminent religious persons, more full of awfulness, and fear, and modesty, and humility; so that in true divinity and right speaking there is no such thing as the unitive way of religion, save only in the effects of duty, obedience, and the expresses of the precise virtue of religion. Meditations in order to a good life let them be as exalted, as the capacity of the person and subject will endure up to the height of contemplation; but if contemplation comes to be a distinct thing and something besides or beyond a distinct degree of virtuous meditation, it is lost to all sense and religion and prudence. *Let no man be hasty to eat of the fruits of paradise before his time.*

And now I shall not need to enumerate the blessed fruits of holy meditation; for it is a grace that is instrumental to all effects, to the production of all virtues and the extinction of all vices, and by conse-

quence the inhabitation of the holy Ghost within us, is the natural or proper emanation from the frequent exercise of this duty, only it hath something particularly excellent, besides its general influence; for meditation is that part of prayer which knits the soul to its right object, and confirms and makes actual our intention and devotion. Meditation is the tongue of the soul and the language of our spirit; and our wandering thoughts in prayer are but the neglects of meditation, and recessions from that duty; and according as we neglect meditation so are our prayers imperfect; meditation being the soul of prayer, and the intention of our spirit. But in all other things meditation is the instrument and conveyance; it habituates our affections to heaven, it hath permanent content, it produces constancy of purpose, despising of things below, inflamed desires of virtue, love of God, self-denial, humility of understanding and universal correction of our life and manners.

### THE PRAYER.

HOLY and eternal Jesus, whose whole life and doctrine was a perpetual sermon of holy life, a treasure of wisdom and a repository of divine materials for meditation, give me grace to understand, diligence and attention to consider, care to lay up, and carefulness to reduce to practise all those actions, discourses and pious lessons and intimations by which thou didst expressly teach, or tacitly imply, or mysteriously signify our duty. Let my understanding become as spiritual in its employment and purposes as it is immaterial in its nature: fill my memory as [a vessel of election with remembrances and notions highly compunctive, and greatly incentive of all the parts of sanctity. Let thy holy Spirit dwell in my soul, instructing my knowledge, sanctifying my thoughts, guiding my affections, directing my will in the choice of virtue, that it may be the great employment of my life to meditate in thy law, to study thy preceptive will, to understand

even the niceties and circumstantialia of my duty, that ignorance may neither occasion a sin, nor become a punishment: take from me all vanity of spirit, lightness of fancy, curiosity and impertinency of enquiry, illusions of the devil and fantastic deceptions: let my thoughts be as my religion, plain, honest, pious, simple, prudent, and charitable, of great employment and force to the production of virtues and extermination of vice, but suffering no transportations of sense and vanity, nothing greater than the capacities of my soul, noting that may minister to any intemperances of spirit, but let me be wholly inebriated with love, and that love wholly spent in doing such actions as best please thee in the conditions of my infirmity and the securities of humility, till thou shalt please to draw the curtain and reveal thy interior beauties in the kingdom of thy eternal glories: which grant for thy mercy's sake, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

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## SECT. VI.

*Of the death of the holy Innocents, or the Babes of Bethlehem, and the flight of Jesus into Egypt.*

ALL this while Herod waited for the return of the wise men, that they might give directions where the child did lie, and his sword might find him out with a certain and direct execution. But when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men he was exceeding wrath. For it now began to deserve his trouble, when his purposes which were most secret began to be contradicted and diverted with a prevention, as if they were resisted by an all-seeing and almighty Providence. He began to suspect the hand of heaven was in it, and saw there was nothing for his purposes to be acted, unless he could dissolve the golden chain of

predestination. Herod believed the divine oracles, foretelling that a King should be born in Bethlehem, and yet his ambition had made him so stupid, that he attempted to cancel the decree of heaven. For if he did not believe the prophecies, why was he troubled? If he did believe them, how could he possibly hinder that event which God had foretold himself would certainly bring to pass?

And therefore since God already had hindered him from the executions of a distinguishing sword, he resolved to send a sword of indiscrimination and confusion, hoping that if he killed all the babes of Bethlehem, this young King's reign also should soon determine. *He therefore sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.* \* For this execution was in the beginning of the second year after Christ's nativity, as in all probability we guess; not at the two year's end as some suppose; because as his malice was subtile, so he intended it should be secure, and though he had been diligent in his enquiry, and was near the time in his computation, yet he that was never sparing of the lives of others, would now to secure his kingdom rather overact his severity for some months, than by doing execution but just to the tittle of his account, hazard the escaping of the Messias.

This execution was sad, cruel and universal; no abatements made for the dire shriekings of the mothers, no tender hearted soldier was employed, no hard hearted person was softened by the weeping eyes, and pity-begging looks of those mothers, that wondered how it was possible any person should hurt their pretty sucklings; no connivencies there, no protections, or friendships, or consideration, or indul-

\* Sic ait Glossa ordinaria, sed Onuphrius in fastis ait hanc cædem biennio post Christum natum contigisse.

gencies, but Herod caused that his own child which was at nurse in the coasts of Bethlehem should bleed to death; which made Augustus Caesar to say, that “in Herod’s house it were better to be a hog than a child;” because the custom of the nation did secure a hog from Herod’s knife, but no religion could secure his child. The sword being thus made sharp by Herod’s commission killed 14000 pretty babes, as the Greeks in their calendar, and the Abyssines of Ethiopia do commemorate in their offices of Liturgy. For Herod crafty and malicious, that is, perfectly <sup>b</sup> tyrant, had caused all the children to be gathered together; which the credulous mothers (supposing it had been to take account of their age and number in order to some taxing) hindered not, but unwittingly suffered themselves and their babes to be betrayed to an irremediable butchery.

*Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, Lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachael weeping for her children and would not be comforted.* All the synonymas of sadness were little enough to express this great weeping when 14000 mothers in one day saw their pretty babes pouring forth their blood into that bosom whence not long before they had sucked milk, and instead of those pretty smiles which use to entertain the fancy and dear affections of their mothers, nothing but affrighting shrieks and then ghastly looks; the mourning was great, like “the mourning in the valley of Hinnom, and there was no comforter;” their sorrow was too big to be cured till it should lie down alone and rest with its own weariness.

But the malice of Herod went also into the hill country, and hearing that of John the son of Zechary,

\* Macrob. Saturnal. lib. 2, c. 4.

<sup>b</sup> Qualis apud Lucianum describitur Tyrannicid. ἐκείνῳ ἦν ὁ τὴν φρυγὴν κρατύνων, ὁ τὴν τυραννιμῶν ἐκκόπτων, ὁ τὴν ἐπιβελουσίας φοβῶν, ὁ τὴν ἐφίχου ἐισπῶν, ὁ ἐνυβρίζων τοῖς γάμοις· ἐκεῖναι αἱ παρθένοι ἀνήγοιτο, καὶ εἰτινες σφαγαὶ καὶ εἰτινες φυγαὶ, καὶ χρημάτων ἀφαιρίσεις, καὶ βασανίαι, καὶ ἔθραι· &c.

great things were spoken, by which he was designed to a great ministry about this young Prince, he attempted in him also to rescind the prophecies, and sent a messenger of death towards him; but the mother's care had been early with him, and sent him into desert places, where he continued till the time appointed of his manifestation unto Israel. But as the children of Bethlehem died in the place of Christ, so did the father of the Baptist die for his child. For Herod slew Zechary between the Temple and the altar, <sup>a</sup> because he refused to betray his son to the fury of that rabid bear. Though some persons very eminent amongst the stars of the primitive church, <sup>b</sup> report a tradition, that a place being separated in the Temple for virgins, Zechary suffered the mother of our Lord to abide there after the birth of her holy son, affirming her still to be a virgin; and that for this reason, not Herod, but the Scribes and Pharisees did kill Zechary.

Tertullian <sup>c</sup> reports that the blood of Zechary had so besmeared the stones of the pavement, which was the altar on which the good old priest was sacrificed, that no act or industry could wash the tincture out; the dye and guilt being both indelible; as if, because God did intend to exact of that nation all the blood of righteous persons from Abel to Zecharias, who was the last of the martyrs of the synagogue, he would leave a character of their guilt in their eyes to upbraid their irreligion, cruelty and infidelity. Some there are who affirm these words of our blessed Saviour not to relate to any Zechary who had been already slain, but to be a prophecy of the last of all the martyrs of the Jews who should be slain immediately before the destruction of the last Temple and the dissolution of the nation. Certain it is that such a <sup>d</sup> Zechary, the son

<sup>a</sup> Sic Chrysost. & Petrus Martyr episc. Alexandr. Niceph. & Cedrenus.

<sup>b</sup> Sic alunt Origen tract. 9. in evang. Matth. S. Basil. homil. de humana Christi generatione. Nyssen in latus Christi. Cyril. adv. Anthropomorphitas.

<sup>c</sup> In scorpiaco. cap. 8.

<sup>d</sup> Lib. 4.



of Baruch (if we may believe Josephus) was slain in the middle of the Temple a little before it was destroyed; and it is agreeable to the nature of the prophecy and reproof here made by our blessed Saviour, that [from Abel to Zechary], should take in all the righteous blood from first to last, till the iniquity was complete; and it is not imaginable that the blood of our blessed Lord, and of St. James their bishop, (for whose death many of themselves thought God destroyed their city) should be left out of the account; which yet would certainly be left out, if any other Zechary should be meant, than he whom they last slew; and in proportion to this Cyprian de Valera expounds that which we read in the past tense, to signify the future; *ye slew*, i. e. *shall slay*, according to the style often used by prophets, and as the aorist of an uncertain signification, will bear. But the first great instance of the divine vengeance for these executions, was upon Herod; who in very few years after was smitten of God with so many plagues and tortures, that himself alone seemed like an hospital of the incurabili. For he was tormented with a soft slow fire, like that of burning iron or the cinders of yew in his body; in his bowels with intolerable cholics and ulcers, in his natural parts with worms, in his feet with gout, in his nerves with convulsions, difficulty of breathing, and out of divers parts of his body issued out so impure and ulcerous a stream, that the loathsomeness, pain, and indignation made him once to snatch a knife with purpose to have killed himself, but that he was prevented by a nephew of his that stood there in his attendance.

But as the flesh of beasts grows callous by stripes, and the pressures of the yoke: so did the heart of Herod, by the loads of divine vengeance. God began his hell here, and the pains of hell never made any man less impious; for Herod perceiving that he must now die, <sup>a</sup> first put to death his son Antipater under

<sup>a</sup> Δεῖναι γὰρ ὃ κοῦται ἀποικοιμῆσαι λίθῳ.

pretence that he would have poisoned him; and that the last scene of his life might for pure malice and exalted spight out do all the rest, because he believed the Jewish nation would rejoice at his death, he assembled all the nobles of the people and put them in prison, giving in charge to his sister Salome, that when he was expiring his last, all the nobility should be slain, that his death might be lamented with a perfect and universal sorrow.

But God that brings to naught the counsels of wicked Princes turned the design against the intention of Herod; for when he was dead and could not call his sister to an account for disobeying his most bloody and unrighteous commands, she released all the imprisoned and despairing gentlemen, and made the day of her brother's death a perfect jubilee, a day of joy, such as was that when the nation was delivered from the violence of Haman in the days of Purim.

And all this while God had provided a sanctuary for the holy child Jesus. For God seeing the secret purposes of blood which Herod had, sent his angel who *appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother and fly into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him; then he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt;*<sup>a</sup> and they made their first abode in Hermopolis in the country of Thebais, whither when they first arrived the child Jesus being by design or providence carried into a temple, all the statues of the idol gods fell down, like Dagon at the presence of the ark, and suffered their timely and just dissolution and dishonour. According to the prophecy of Isaiah: *Behold the Lord shall come into Egypt and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence.*<sup>c</sup> And in the life of the prophet Jeremy,

<sup>a</sup> Matth. 2. 13.

<sup>b</sup> Euseb. de demonstr. c. 20. S. Athanas. lib. de incarnat. verbi. Palladius in vita S. Apollon.

<sup>c</sup> Isa. 19. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Dorotheus in sinopsi. Pallad. in vita Apollon.

written by Epiphanius it is reported, "that he told the Egyptiau priests that then their idols should be broken in pieces, when a holy Virgin with her child should enter into their country;" which prophecy possibly might be the cause that the Egyptians did, besides their vanities, worship also an infant in a manger, and a Virgin in her bed.

From Hermopolis to Maturea went these holy pilgrims in pursuance of their safety and provisions, where it was reported they dwelt in a garden of balsam, till Joseph being at the end of seven years (as it is commonly believed) ascertained by an angel of the death of Herod and commanded to return to the land of Israel, he was obedient to the heavenly vision, and returned. But hearing that Archelaus did reign in the place of his father, and knowing that the cruelty and ambition of Herod was hereditary or entailed upon Archelaus, being also warned to turn aside into the parts of Galilee, which was of a distinct jurisdiction, governed indeed by one of Herod's sons, but not by Archelaus, thither he diverted, and there that holy family remained in the city of Nazareth, whence the holy child had the appellative of a Nazaréne.



#### Ad. SECT. VI.

#### *Considerations upon the death of the Innocents, and the flight of holy Jesus into Egypt.*

HEROD having called the wise men, and received information of their design, and the circumstances of the child, pretended religion too, and desired them to bring him word, when they had found the babe, that he might come and worship him; meaning to make a sacrifice of him, to whom he should pay his adoration: and instead of investing the young prince with a royal purple he would have stained his swad

dling bands with his blood. It is ever dangerous when a wicked prince pretends religion, his design is then foulest by how much it needs to put on a fairer outside: but it was an early policy in the world, and it concerned men's interests to seem religious, when they thought that to be so, was an abatement of great designs. When Jezebel designed the robbing and destroying Naboth, she sent to the elders to proclaim a fast; for the external and visible remonstrances of religion leave in the spirits of men a great reputation of the seeming person, and therefore they will not rush into a furious sentence against his actions, at least not judge them with prejudice against the man towards whom they are so fairly prepared, but do some violence to their own understanding, and either disbelieve their own reason, or excuse the fact, or think it but an error, or a less crime, or the incidencies of humanity, or however, are so long in decreeing against him, whom they think to be religious, that the rumour is abated, or the stream of indignation is diverted by other laborious arts intervening before our zeal is kindled, and so the person is unjudged, or at least the design secured.

But in this, human policy was exceedingly infatuated, and though Herod had trusted his design to no keeper but himself, and had pretended fair, having religion for the word, and called the wise men privately, and entrusted them with no employment but a civil request, an account of their success of the journey, which they had no reason or desire to conceal; yet his heart was open to the eye of heaven, and the sun was not more visible than his dark purpose was to God, and it succeeded accordingly; the child was sent away, the wise men warned not to return, Herod was mocked and enraged; and so his craft became foolish and vain; and so are all counsels intended against God, or any thing of which he himself hath undertaken the protection. For although we understand not the reasons of security, because we see not

that admirable concentrating of infinite things in the divine providence, whereby God brings his purposes to act by ways unlooked for, and sometimes contradictory; yet the public and perpetual experience of the world hath given continual demonstrations, that all evil counsels have come to naught; that the succeeding of an impious design is no argument that the man is prosperous; that the curse is then surest, when his fortune spreads the largest; that the contradiction and impossibilities of deliverance to pious persons are but an opportunity and engagement for God to do wonders, and to glorify his power and to exalt his mercy by the instances of miraculous or extraordinary events. And as the afflictions happening to good men are alleviated by the support of God's good spirit; and enduring them here are but consignations to an honourable amends hereafter: so the succeeding prosperities of fortunate impiety, when they meet with punishment in the next or in the third age, or in the deletion of a people five ages after, are the greatest arguments of God's providence, who keeps wrath in store, and forgets not to do judgment for all them that are oppressed with wrong; it was laid up with God, and was perpetually in his eye, being the matter of a lasting, durable, and unremitted anger.

But God had care of the holy child; he sent his angel to warn Joseph with the babe and his mother to fly into Egypt Joseph and Mary instantly arise, and without enquiry how they shall live there, or when they shall return, or how be secured, or what accommodations they shall have in their journey, at the same hour of the night begin the pilgrimage with the cheerfulness of obedience, and the securities of faith, and the confidence of hope, and the joys of love, knowing themselves to be recompensed for all the trouble they could endure, that they were instruments of the safety of the holy Jesus, that they then were serving God, that they were encircled with the secu-

rities of the divine providence, and in these dispositions all places were alike; for every region was a paradise, where they were in company with Jesus. \* And indeed that man wants many degrees of faith and prudence, who is solicitous for the support of his necessities, when he is doing the commandment of God. If he commands thee to offer a sacrifice, himself will provide a lamb, or enable thee to find one; and he would remove thee into a state of separation, where thy body needs no supplies of provision, if he meant thou shouldst serve him without provisions; he will certainly take away thy need, or satisfy it, he will feed thee himself as he did the Israelites, <sup>b</sup> or take away thy hunger as he did to Moses, or send ravens to feed thee as he did to Elias, or make charitable people minister to thee as the widow to Elisha, or give thee his own portion as he maintained the Levites, or make thine enemies to pity thee as the Assyrians did the captive Jews; for whatsoever the world hath and whatsoever can be conveyed by wonder, or by providence, all that is thy security for provisions, so long as thou doest the work of God. And remember that the assurance of blessing, and health, and salvation, is not made by doing what we list, or being where we desire, but by doing God's will, and being in the place of his appointment; we may be safe in Egypt, if we be there in obedience to God, and we may perish among the babes of Bethlehem, if we be there by our own election.

Joseph and Mary did not argue against the angel's message, because they had a confidence of their charge, who with the breath of his mouth could have destroyed Herod, though he had been abetted with all the legions marching under the Roman eagles; but they, like the two cherubims about the propitiatory, took the child between them, and fled, giving way to the fury of persecution, which possibly when the ma-

\* — τὸς θεὸς ἔχων τισὶν φίλος, ἀρίστην μηχανὴν ἔχει δ' ὅμως. Eurip.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. 13. 5. 6.

terials are withdrawn might expire, and die like fire, which else would rage for ever. Jesus fled, undertook a sad journey, in which the roughness of the ways, his own tenderness, the youth of his mother, the old age of his supposed father, the smallness of their viaticum and accommodation for their voyage, the no kindred they were to go to, hopeless of comforts and exterior supplies, were so many circumstances of poverty, and lesser strokes of the persecution; things that himself did choose to remonstrate the verity of his nature, the infirmity of his person, the humility of his spirit, the austerity of his undertaking, the burden of his charge, and by which he did teach us the same virtues he then expressed; and also consigned this permission to all his disciples in future ages, that they also may flee from their persecutors, when the case is so, that their work is not done; that is, they may glorify God with their lives more than with their death. And of this they are ascertained by the arguments of prudent account; for sometimes we are called to glorify God by dying, and the interest of the church, and the faith of many may be concerned in it; then we must abide by it. In other cases it is true that Demosthenes said in apology for his own escaping from a lost field, “a man that runs away may fight again.” And S. Paul made use of a guard of soldiers to rescue him from the treachery of the Jewish rulers, and of a basket to escape from the inquisition of the governor of Damascus; and the primitive Christians, of grotts and subterraneous retirements, and S. Athanasius of a fair lady’s house, and others of deserts and graves, as knowing it was no shame to fly when their master himself had fled, that his time and his work might be fulfilled, and when it was, he then laid his life down.

It is hard to set down particular rules that may indefinitely guide all persons in the stating of their own

case; because all things that depend upon circumstances are alterable unto infinite. But as God's glory and the good of the church are the great considerations to be carried before us all the way, and in proportions to them we are to determine and judge our questions: so also our infirmities are allowable in the scrutiny; for I doubt not but God intended it a mercy and a compliance with human weakness, when he gave us this permission, as well as it was a design to secure the opportunities of his service, and the consummation of his own work by us. And since our fears and the incommodities of flight, and the sadness of exile, and the insecurities and inconveniencies of a strange and new abode are part of the persecution; provided that God's glory be not certainly and apparently neglected, nor the church evidently scandalized by our flight, all interpretations of the question in favour of ourselves, and the declension of that part which may tempt us to apostacy, or hazard our confidence, and the choosing the lesser part of the persecution, is not against the rule of faith, and always hath in it less glory, but oftentimes more security.

But thus far Herod's ambition transported him, even to resolutions of murder of the highest person, the most glorious and the most innocent upon earth; and it represents that passion to be the most troublesome and vexatious thing that can afflict the sons of men. Virtue hath not half so much trouble in it, it sleeps quietly without startings and affrighting fancies, it looks cheerfully, smiles with much serenity, and though it laughs not often, yet it is ever delightful in the apprehensions of some faculty: it fears no man, nor no thing, nor is it discomposed; and hath no concernments in the great alterations of the world; and entertains death like a friend, and reckons the issues of it as the greatest of its hopes: but ambition is full of distractions; it teems with stratagems, as Rebecca with struggling twins, and is swelled with expectations as with a tympany, and sleeps some-



times as the wind in a storm, still and quiet for a minute, that it may burst out into an impetuous blast till the cordage of his heart strings crack; fears when none is nigh, and prevents things which never had intention, and falls under the inevitability of such accidents, which either could not be foreseen or not prevented. It is an infinite labour to make a man's self miserable, and the utmost acquist is so goodly a purchase, that he makes his days full of sorrow to enjoy the troubles of a three year's reign; for Herod lived but three years, or five at the most, after the flight of Jesus into Egypt. And therefore there is no greater unreasonableness in the world than in the designs of ambition; for it makes the present certainly miserable, unsatisfied, troublesome and discontent, for the uncertain acquist of an honour, which nothing can secure; and besides a thousand possibilities of miscarrying, it relies upon no greater certainty than our life, and when we are dead all the world sees who was the fool. But it is a strange caitiveness and baseness of disposition, of men so furiously and unsatiably to run after perishing and uncertain interests in defiance of all the reason and religion of the world, and yet to have no appetite to such excellencies which satisfy reason and content the spirit, and create great hopes, and ennoble our expectation, and are advantages to communities of men and public societies, and which all wise men teach and all religion commands.

And it is not amiss to observe how <sup>†</sup>Herod vexed himself extremely upon a mistake; the child Jesus was born a King, but it was a King of all the world, not confined within the limits of a province, like the weaker beauties of a torch to shine in one room, but like the sun, his empire was over all the world; and if Herod would have become but his tributary and paid him the acknowledgments of his Lord, he should

<sup>†</sup> *Dubia pro certis solent timere reges. Seneca Oedip.*

have had better conditions than under Cæsar, \* and yet have been as absolute in his own jewry as he was before; his kingdom was not of this world, and he that gives heavenly kingdoms to all his servants would not have stooped to have taken up Herod's petty coronet; <sup>b</sup> but as it is a very vanity which ambition seeks, so it is a shadow that disturbs and discomposes all its motion and apprehensions.

And the same mistake caused calamities to descend upon the church: for some of the persecutions commenced upon pretence, Christianity was an enemy to government: But the pretence was infinitely unreasonable, and therefore had the fate of senseless allegations, it disbanded presently; for no external accident did so incorporate the excellence of Christ's religion into the hearts of men, as the innocence of the men, their inoffensive deportment, the modesty of their designs, their great humility and obedience, a life expressly in enmity and contestation against secular ambition. And it is to be feared that the mingling human interests with religion will deface the image Christ hath stamped upon it; certain it is, the metal is much abated by so impure allay, while the Christian prince serves his end of ambition, and bears arms upon his neighbour's country for the service of religion, making Christ's kingdom to invade Herod's rights; <sup>c</sup> and in the state ecclesiastical secular interests have so deep a portion, that there are snares laid to tempt a persecution, and men are invited to sacrilege while the revenues of a church are a fair fortune for a prince. I make no scruple to find fault with

\* Hostis Herodes impie  
Christum venire quid times?  
Non auferet terrestria  
Qui regna dat cœlestia.

<sup>b</sup> Qui sceptra duro sævus imperio regit  
Timeat timeantes, metus in authorem cadit.

Senec. Oedip.

<sup>c</sup> Καὶ ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων πολυτέλεια τιμὴ εἰς Θεὸν ἢ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τὴν ἰδέαν φρονήματι προσάγοιτο· δῆρα γὰρ δυνατοῖσι ἀφρόνων, πρὸς τροφὴν ἢ ἀναθήματα ἱεροσυλοῦν χορηγία· τὸ δὲ εἶδειν φρόνημα δικῶς ἰδεασμένον συνάπτει Θεῷ. Hierocl.

painters that picture the poor saints with rich garments ; for though they deserved better, yet they had but poor ones : and some have been tempted to cheat the saint, not out of ill will to his sanctity, but love to his shrine, and to the beauty of the clothes, with which some imprudent persons have of old time dressed their images : so it is in the fate of the church, persecution, and the robes of Christ were her portion, and her clothing, and when she is dressed up in gaudy fortunes, it is no more than she deserves, but yet sometimes it is occasion that the devil cheats her of her holiness, and the men of the world sacrilegiously cheat her of her riches : and then when God hath reduced her to that poverty he first promised and intended to her, the persecution ceases, and sanctity returns, and God curses the sacrilege, and stirs up men's minds to religious donatives : and all is well till she grows rich again. And if it be dangerous in any man to be rich, and discomposes his steps in his journey to eternity, it is not then so proportionable to the analogy of Christ's poverty, and the inheritance of the church, to be sedulous in acquiring great temporalities, and putting princes in jealousy and states into care for securities, lest all the temporal should run into ecclesiastical possession.

If the church have by the active piety of a credulous, a pious, and less observant age been endowed with great possessions, she hath rules enough, and poor enough, and necessities enough to dispend what she hath with advantages to religion : but then all she gets by it is the trouble of an unthankful, a suspected and unsatisfying dispensation ; and the church is made by evil persons a scene of ambition and stratagem, and to get a German bishoprick is to be a prince ; and to

\* Vide quæ dixit Ammian. Marcel. lib. 17. et epistolas S. Gregorii M. l. 4. ep. 39. 34. 36. et l. 6. ep. 30. l. 7. indict. 1. ep. 30. et concil. Africanum quo monitus est Cœlestinus Papa, ne fumosum typhum sæculi in ecclesiam, quæ lucem simplicitatis et humilitatis diem, Deum videre cupientibus præfert, videamur inducere.

defend with niceness and suits of law every custom or lesser rite even to the breach of charity, and the scandal of religion is called a duty; and every single person is bound to forgive injuries, and to quit his right rather than his charity; but if it is not a duty in the church also, in them whose life should be excellent to the degree of example, I would fain know, if there be not greater care taken to secure the ecclesiastical revenue, than the public charity and the honour of religion in the strict piety of the clergy: for as the not engaging in suits may occasion bold people to wrong the church, so the necessity of engaging is occasion of losing charity and of great scandal. I find not fault with a free revenue of the church; it is in some sense necessary to governors, and to preserve the consequents of their authority: but I represent that such things are occasion of much mischief to the church, and less holiness, and in all cases, respect should be had to the design of Christianity, to the prophecies of Jesus, to the promised lot of the church, to the dangers of riches, to the excellencies, and advantages, and rewards of poverty; and if the church have enough to perform all her duties and obligations cheerfully, let her of all societies be soonest content. If she have plenty, let her use it temperately and charitably; if she have not, let her not be querulous and troublesome; but however, it would be thought upon, that though in judging the quantum of the church's portion the world thinks every thing too much, yet we must be careful we do not judge every thing too little; and if our fortune be safe between envy and contempt, it is much mercy. If it be despicable, it is safe for ecclesiastics, though it may be accidentally inconvenient, or less profitable to others; but if it be great, public experience hath made remonstrance, that it mingles with the world, and dirties those fingers which are instrumental in consecration, and the more solemn rites of Christianity.

Jesus fled from the persecution; as he did not stand it out, so he did not stand out against it; he was careful to transmit no precedent, or encouragement of resisting tyrannous princes, when they offer violence to religion, and our lives: he would not stand disputing for privileges, nor calling in auxiliaries from the Lord of Hosts, who could have spared him many legions of angels, every single spirit being able to have defeated all Herod's power; but he knew it was a hard lesson to learn patience, and all the excuses in the world would be sought out to discourage such a doctrine by which we are taught to die, or lose all we have, or suffer inconveniences at the will of a tyrant; we need no authentic examples, much less doctrines to invite men to war, from which we see Christian princes cannot be restrained with the engagements and peaceful theorems of an excellent and a holy religion, nor subjects kept from rebelling by the interests of all religions in the world, nor by the necessities and reasonableness of obedience, nor the endearments of all public societies of men; one word, or an intimation from Christ would have sounded an alarm, and put us into postures of defence, when all Christ's excellent sermons, and rare exemplar actions cannot tie our hands. But it is strange now, that of all men in the world Christians should be such fighting people, or that Christian subjects should lift up a thought against a Christian prince, when they had no intimation of encouragement from their master, but many from him to endear obedience; and humility, and patience, and charity, and these four make up the whole analogy, and represent the chief design and meaning of Christianity in its moral constitution.

But Jesus, when himself was safe, could also have secured the poor babes of Bethlehem, with thousands of diversions and avocations of Herod's purposes, or by discovering his own escape in some safe manner not unknown to the divine wisdom; but yet it did not so

please God: He is Lord of his creatures, and hath absolute dominion over our lives, <sup>a</sup> and he had an end of glory to serve upon these babes, and an end of justice upon Herod; and to the children he made such compensation, that they had no reason to complain that they were so soon made stars, when they shined in their little orbs and participations of eternity; forso the sense of the church hath been, that they having died the death of martyrs, though incapable of making the choice, God supplied the defects of their will, by his own entertainment of the thing; that as the misery and their death, so also their glorification might have the same author in the same manner of causality; even by a peremptory and unconditioned determination in these particulars. This sense is pious and nothing unreasonable, considering that all circumstances of the thing make the case particular; but the immature death of other infants is a sadder story; <sup>b</sup> for though I have no warrant or thought that it is ill with them after death; and in what manner or degree of well-being it is, there is no revelation; yet I am not of opinion, that the securing of so low a condition as theirs in all reason is like to be, will make recompense, or is an equal blessing with the possibilities of such an eternity, as is proposed to them who in the use of reason and a holy life glorify God with a free obedience; and if it were otherwise, it were no blessing to live till the use of reason; and fools and babes were in the best, because in the securest condition, and certain expectation of equal glories.'

As soon as Herod was dead (for the divine vengeance waited his own time for his arrest) the angel presently brought Joseph word; the holy family was full of content and indifferency, not solicitous for return, not distrustful of the divine providence, full of poverty and sanctity, and content, waiting God's time,

<sup>a</sup> *Ætas nec dum habilis ad pugnam idonea extitit ad coronam; et ut apparet innocentes esse qui propter Christum necantur, infantia innocens occisa est. S. Cyprian.* <sup>b</sup> *Athenagoras dixit infantes resurrecturos, sed non venturos in judicium.*

at the return of which God delayed not to recal them from exile; out of Egypt he called his Son, and directed Joseph's fear and discourse that he should divert to a place in the jurisdiction of Philip, where the heir of Herod's cruelty, Archelaus, had nothing to do; and this very series of providence and care God expresses to all his sons by adoption; and will determine the time and set bounds to every persecution, and punish the instruments, and ease our pains, and refresh our sorrows, and give quietness to our fears, and deliverance from our troubles, and sanctify it all, and give a crown at last, and all in his good time, if we wait the coming of the angel, and in the mean time do our duty with care, and sustain our temporals with indifferency; and in all our troubles and displeasing accidents we may call to mind, that God by his holy and most reasonable providence hath so ordered it, that the spiritual advantages we may receive from the holy use of such incommodities, are of great recompense and interest, and that in such accidents the holy Jesus having gone before us in precedent, does go along with us by love and fair assistances, and that makes the present condition infinitely more eligible, than the greatest splendour of secular fortune.

### THE PRAYER.

O BLESSED and eternal God, who didst suffer thy holy Son to fly from the violence of an enraged prince, and didst chuse to defend him in the ways of his infirmity by hiding himself, and a voluntary exile; be thou a defence to all thy faithful people, whenever persecution arises against them, send them the ministry of angels to direct them into ways of security, and let thy holy spirit guide them in the paths of sanctity; and let thy providence continue in custody over their persons till the times of refreshment, and the day of redemption shall return: Give, O Lord, to thy whole church sanctity and zeal, and the confidences of

a holy faith, boldness of confession, humility, content and resignation of spirit, generous contempt of the world, and unmingled desires of thy glory; and the edification of thy elect, that no secular interests disturb her duty, or discompose her charity, or depress her hopes, or in any unequal degree possess her affections and pollute her spirit, but preserve her from the snares of the world, and the devil, from the rapine and greedy desires of sacrilegious persons, and in all conditions whether of affluence or want may she still promote the interests of religion: that when plenteousness is within her palaces, and peace in her walls, that condition may then be best for her; and when she is made as naked as Jesus to his passion, then poverty may be best for her, that in all estates she may glorify thee, and in all accidents and changes thou mayest sanctify and bless her, and at last bring her to the eternal riches and abundances of glory, where no persecution shall disturb her rest. Grant this for sweet Jesus sake, who suffered exile and hard journeys, and all the inconveniencies of a friendless person, in a strange province; to whom with thee and the eternal Spirit be glory for ever, and blessing in all generations of the world and for ever and ever.--- Amen.

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## SECT. VII.

*Of the younger years of Jesus, and his Disputation with the Doctors in the Temple.*

FROM the return of this holy family to Judea, and their habitation in Nazareth, till the blessed child Jesus was twelve years of age, we have nothing transmitted to us out of any authentic record; but that they went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when Jesus was twelve years old and was in the holy city attending upon the paschal



rites, and solemn sacrifices of the law, his parents having fulfilled their days of festivity, went homeward supposing the child had been in the caravan among his friends, and so they erred for the space of a whole day's journey; and when they sought him and found him not, they returned to Jerusalem full of fears and sorrow.

No fancy can imagine the doubts, the apprehensions, the possibilities of mischief, and the tremblings of heart which the holy Virgin Mother felt thronging about her fancy and understanding; but such a person who hath been tempted to the danger of a violent fear and transportation, by apprehension of the loss of a hope greater than a miracle; her discourses with herself could have nothing of distrust, but much of sadness and wonder, and the indetermination of her thoughts was a trouble, great as the passion of her love; possibly an angel might have carried him she knew not whither; or it may be the son of Herod had gotten the prey which his cruel father missed; or he was sick, or detained out of curiosity and wonder, or any thing but what was right; and by this time she was come to Jerusalem, and having spent three days in her sad and holy pursuit of her lost jewel, despairing of the prosperous event of any human diligence, as in all other cases she had accustomed, she made her address to God, and entering into the Temple to pray; God, that knew her desires, prevented her with the blessings of goodness, and there her sorrow was changed into joy and wonder; for there she found her holy son *sitting in the midst of the doctors both hearing them and asking them questions.*

*And when they saw him they were amazed, and so were all that heard him. at his understanding and answers; beyond his education, beyond his experience, beyond his years, and even beyond the common spirits of the best men, discoursing up to the height of a prophet with the clearness of an angel, and the infallibility of inspiration; for here it was verified in*

the highest and most literal signification, that *out of the mouths of babes God had ordained strength*; but this was the strength of argument, and science of the highest mysteries of religion and secret philosophy.

Glad were the parents of the child to find him illustrated with a miracle, concerning which when he had given them such an account, which they understood not, but yet Mary laid up in her heart, as that this was part of his employment and his Father's business, he returned with them to Nazareth, and was subject to his parents; where he lived in all holiness and humility, shewing great signs of wisdom, endearing himself to all that beheld his conversation, did nothing less than might become the great expectation which his miraculous birth had created of him: *for he increased in wisdom and stature, and favour with God and man*, still growing in proportion to his great beginnings to a miraculous excellency of grace, sweetness of demeanor, and excellency of understanding.

They that love to serve God in hard questions, use to dispute whether Christ did truly, or in appearance only increase in wisdom. For being personally united to the word, and being the eternal wisdom of the Father, it seemed to them, that a plenitude of wisdom was as natural to the whole person, as to the divine nature. But others, fixing their belief upon the words of the story, which equally affirms Christ, as properly to have increased in favour with God as with man, in wisdom as in stature, they apprehend no inconvenience in affirming it to belong to the verity of human nature to have degrees of understanding as well as of other perfections: and although the humanity of Christ made up the same person with the Divinity, yet they think the Divinity still to be free, even in those communications which were imparted to his inferior nature, and the Godhead might as well suspend the emanation of all the treasures of wisdom upon the humanity for a time, as he did the beatifical vision, which most certainly was not imparted in the

interval of his sad and dolorous passion; but whether it were truly or in appearance, in habit or in exercise of act, by increase of notion or experience, it is certain the promotions of the holy child were great, admirable, and as full of wonder as of sanctity, and sufficient to entertain the hopes and expectations of Israel with preparations and dispositions, as to satisfy their wonder for the present, so to accept him at the time of his publication, they having no reason to be scandalized at the smallness, improbability, and indifferency of his first beginnings.

But the holy child had also an employment, which he undertook in obedience to his supposed father, for exercise and example of humility, and for the support of that holy family which was dear in the eyes of God, but not very splendid by the opulency of a free and indulgent fortune. He wrought in the trade of a carpenter, and when Joseph died, which happened before the manifestation of Jesus unto Israel, he wrought alone, and was no more called the carpenter's son, but the carpenter himself. *Is not this carpenter the son of Mary?* said his offended countrymen. And in this condition the blessed Jesus did abide till he was thirty years old, for he that came to fulfill the law would not suffer one tittle of it to pass unaccomplished; for by the law of the nation, and custom of the religion, no priest was to officiate, or prophet was to preach before he was thirty years of age.

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### Ad. SECT. VII.

#### *Considerations of the Disputation of Jesus with the Doctors in the Temple.*

JOSEPH and Mary being returned unto Nazareth were sedulous to enjoy the privileges of their coun

\* Mark 6, 3.

try, the opportunities of religion, the public address to God, in the rites of festivals, and solemnities of the Temple; they had been long grieved with the impurities and idol rites, which they with sorrow had observed to be done in Egypt; and being deprived of the blessings of those holy societies and employments, they used to enjoy in Palestine, at their return came to the offices of their religion with appetites of fire, and keen as the evening wolf; and all the joys which they should have received in respersion and distinct emanations, if they had kept their anniversaries at Jerusalem, all that united they received in the duplication of their joys at their return, and in the fulfilling themselves with the refection and holy viands of religion. For so God uses to satisfy the longings of holy people, when a persecution has shut up the beautiful gates of the Temple, or denied to them opportunities of access, although God hears the prayers they make with their windows towards Jerusalem, with their hearts opened with desires of the public communions, and sends them a prophet with a private meal, as Habakkuk came to Daniel, yet he fills their hearts when the year of jubilee returns, and the people sing, *In convertendo*, the song of joy for their redemption: for as of all sorrows the deprivations and eclipses of religion are the saddest, and of the worst and most inconvenient consequence; so in proportion are the joys of spiritual plenty and religious returns; the communion of saints being like the primitive corban, a repository to feed all the needs of the church or like a taper joined to a torch, itself is kindled and increases the other flames.

They failed not to go to Jerusalem, for all those holy prayers and ravishments of love, those excellent meditations and intercourses with God, their private readings and discourses were but entertainments and satisfaction of their necessities; they lived with them during their retirements; but it was a feast when they went to Jerusalem, and the freer and more indulgent re-

fection of the spirit; for in public solemnities God opens his treasures, and pours out his grace more abundantly: private devotions, and secret offices of religion, are like refreshing of a garden with the distilling and petty drops of a water-pot: but addresses to the Temple, and serving God in the public communion of saints, is like rain from heaven; <sup>a</sup> where the offices are described by a public spirit, heightened by the greater portions of assistance, and receive advantages by the adunations and symbols of charity, and increment by their distinct title to promises appropriate even to their assembling, and mutual support, by the piety of example, by the communication of counsels, by the awfulness of public observation, and the engagements of holy customs. For religion is a public virtue, it is the ligature of souls and the great instrument of the conservation of bodies politic, and is united in a common object, the God of all the world, and is managed by public ministeries, by sacrifice, adoration, and prayer, in which with variety of circumstances indeed, but with infinite consent and union of design, all the sons of Adam are taught to worship God; and it is a publication of God's honour, its very purpose being to declare to all the world how great things God hath done for us, whether in public donatives or private missives; so that the very design, temper, and constitution of religion is to be a public address to God; and although God is present in closets, and there also distils his blessings in small rain, yet to the societies of religion and publication of worship, as we are invited by the great blessings and advantages of communion, so also we are in some proportions more straightly limited by the analogy and exigence of the duty. <sup>b</sup> It is a persecution when we are forced from public worshippings;

<sup>a</sup> Habet semper privilegium suum, ut sacratius fiat quod publica lege celebratur, quam quod privata institutione dependitur. *Leo de jejun. 7, mensis. Idem. Serm. 4.* Publica præferenda sunt privatis, & tunc est efficacior sanctorumq. devotio quando in operibus pietatis totius Ecclesie unus est animus, & unus sensus.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. 10, 25.

no man can hinder our private addresses to God, every man can build a chapel in his breast, and himself be the priest, and his heart the sacrifice, and every foot of glebe he treads on be the altar, and this no tyrant can prevent. If then there can be persecution in the offices of religion, it is the prohibition of public profession and communions, and therefore he that denies to himself the opportunities of public rites and conventions is his own persecutor.

But when Jesus was twelve years old, and his parents had finished their offices, and returned filled with the pleasures of religion, they missed the child, and sought him amongst their kindred, but there they found him not; for whoever seeks Jesus must seek him in the offices of religion, in the Temple, not amongst the engagements and pursuit of worldly interests; *I forgot also mine own father's house*, said David, the father of this holy child, and so must we, when we run in an enquiry after the son of David; but our relinquishing must not be a dereliction of duty, but of 'engagement;' our affections toward kindred must always be with charity, and according to the endearments of our relation, but without immersion, and such adherencies, as either contradict or lessen our duty towards God.

It was a sad effect of their pious journey to lose the joy of their family and the hopes of all the world; but it often happens that after spiritual employments God seems to absent himself, and withdraw the sensible effects of his presence, that we may seek him with the same diligence and care and holy fears, the holy virgin mother sought the blessed Jesus. And it is a design of great mercy in God to take off the light from the eyes of a holy person, that he may not be abused with complacencies and too confident opinions and reflexions upon his fair performances. For we usually judge of the well or ill of our devotions and services by what we feel; and we think God rewards every thing in the present, and by proportion

to our own expectations; and if we feel a present rejoicing of spirit, all is well with us, the smok of the sacrifice ascended right in a holy cloud; but if we feel nothing of comfort, then we count it a prodigy and ominous, and we suspect ourselves (and most commonly we have reason :) such irradiations of cheerfulness are always welcome, but it is not always anger that takes them away; the cloud removed from before the camp of Israel, and stood before the host of Pharaoh, but this was a design of ruin to the Egyptians, and of security to Israel; and if those bright angels that go with us to direct our journeys remove out of our sight and stand behind us, it is not always an argument that the anger of the Lord is gone out against us; but such decays of sense and clouds of spirit are excellent conservators of humility, and restrain those intemperances and vainer thoughts which we are prompted to in the gaiety of our spirits.

But we often give God cause to remove and for a while to absent himself, and his doing of it sometimes upon the just provocations of our demerits, makes us at other times with good reason to suspect ourselves even in our best actions. But sometimes we are vain, or remiss, or pride invades us in the darkness and incuriousness of our spirits, and we have a secret sin which God would have us to enquire after; and when we suspect every thing, and condemn ourselves with strictest and most angry sentence, then it may be, God will with a ray of light break through the cloud; if not, it is nothing the worse for us; for although the visible remonstrance and face of things in all the absences and withdrawals of Jesus be the same, yet if a sin be the cause of it, the withdrawing is a taking away his favour and his love; but if God does it to secure thy piety, and to enflame thy desires, or to prevent a crime, then he withdraws a gift only, nothing of his love, and yet the darkness of the spirit and sadness seem equal. It is hard in these cases to discover the cause, as it is nice to judge the condition of

the effect, and therefore it is prudent to ascertain our condition by improving our care and our religion; and in all accidents to make no judgment concerning God's favour by what we feel, but by what we do.

When the holy Virgin with much religion and sadness had sought her joy, at last she found him disputing among the Doctors, hearing them and asking them questions; and besides that he now first opened a fontinel, and there sprang out an excellent rivulet from his abyss of wisdom, he consigned this truth to his disciples, that they who mean to be doctors and teach others, must in their first accesses and degrees of discipline learn of those whom God and public order hath set over us, in the mysteries of religion.

#### THE PRAYER.

BLESSED and most holy Jesus, fountain of grace and comfort, treasure of wisdom and spiritual emanations, be pleased to abide with me for ever, by the inhabitation of thy interior assistances and refreshments, and give me a corresponding love, acceptable and unstained purity, care and watchfulness over my ways, that I may never, by provoking thee to anger, cause thee to remove thy dwelling, or draw a cloud before thy holy face; but if thou art pleased upon a design of charity, or trial, to cover my eyes, that I may not behold the bright rays of thy favour, nor be refreshed with spiritual comforts; let thy love support my spirit by ways insensible, and in all my needs give me such a portion as may be instrumental and incentive to performance of my duty, and in all accidents let me continue to seek thee by prayers and humiliation, and frequent desires, and the strictnesses of a holy life; that I may follow thy example, pursue thy footsteps, be supported by thy strength, guided by thy hand, enlightened by thy favour, and may at last after a persevering holiness and an unwearied industry dwell with thee in the regions of light, and eter-



nal glory, where there shall be no fears of parting from the habitations of felicity and the union and fruition of thy presence, O blessed and most holy Jesus. Amen.



## SECT. VIII.

*Of the Preaching of John the Baptist, preparative to the Manifestation of Jesus.*

WHEN Herod had drunk so great a draught of blood at Bethlehem, and sought for more from the hill country, Elizabeth carried her son into the wilderness, there in the desert places and recesses to hide him from the fury of that beast, where she attended him with as much care and tenderness, <sup>a</sup> as the affections and fears of a mother could express in the permission of those fruitless solitudes; the child was about eighteen months old when he first fled to sanctuary; but after forty days his mother died, and his father Zecharry at the time of his ministration, which happened about this time, was killed in the court of the Temple; so that the child was exposed to all the dangers and infelicities of an orphan, in a place of solitariness and discomfort, in a time when a bloody king endeavoured his destruction: *But when his father and mother were taken from him, the Lord took him up.* <sup>b</sup> For according to the tradition of the Greeks, God deputed an angel to be his nourisher and guardian, as he had formerly done to Ishmael who dwelt in the wilderness, and to Elias when he fled from the rage of Ahab: so to this child, who came in the spirit of Elias, to make demonstration, that there can be no want where God undertakes the care and provision.

<sup>a</sup> Niceph. lib. 1. c. 14.

<sup>b</sup> S. Chrys. homil. de nativ. S. Jo. Baptistæ, Geh. 21. 17. 1 King 19. 5.

The entertainment that St. John's providitore, the angel gave him, was such as the wilderness did afford,<sup>a</sup> and such as might dispose him to a life of austerity; for there he continued spending his time in meditations, contemplation, prayer, affections and colloquies with God, eating flies and wild honey, not clothed in soft, but a hairy garment, and a leathern girdle, till he was thirty years of age. And then *being the fifteenth year of Tiberius, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, the word of God came unto John in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching and baptizing.*

This John according to the prophesies of him, and designation of his person by the Holy Ghost, was the fore-runner of Christ, sent to dispose the people for his entertainment, and prepare his ways; and therefore it was necessary his person should be so extraordinary, and full of sanctity, and so clarified by great concurrencies and wonder in the circumstances of his life, as might gain credit and reputation to the testimony he was to give concerning his Lord, the Saviour of the world. And so it happened.

For as the Baptist, while he was in the wilderness became the pattern of solitary and contemplative life, a school of virtue, and example of sanctity, and singular austerity: so at his emigration from the places of his retirement, he seemed, what indeed he was, a rare and excellent personage; and the wonders which were great at his birth, the prediction of his conception by an angel, which never had before happened, but in the persons of Isaac and Samson; the contempt of the world, which he bore about him, his mortified countenance and deportment, his austere and heremitical life, his vehement spirit and excellent zeal in preaching, created so great opinions of him among the people, that all held him for a prophet in

<sup>a</sup> Vestis erat curvi setis conserta cameli,  
Contra luxuriam molles duraret ut artus,  
Arceretque graves compuncto corpore somnos.  
Paulinus.

his office, for a heavenly person in his own particular, and a rare example of sanctity, and holy life to all others; and all this being made solemn and ceremonious by his baptism, he prevailed so, that he made excellent and apt preparations for the Lord's appearing; *For there went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him, confessing their sins.*

The Baptist having by so heavenly means won upon the affections of all men, his sermons and his testimony concerning Christ were the more likely to be prevalent, and accepted; and the sum of them was repentance and dereliction of sins, and bringing forth the fruits of good life; in the promoting of which doctrine he was a severe reprehender of the Pharisees and Sadduces, he exhorted the people to works of mercy, the publicans to do justice, and to decline oppression, the soldiers to abstain from plundering, and doing violence or rapine; and publishing, that he was not the Christ, that he only baptized with water, but the Messias should baptize with the holy Ghost, and with fire; he finally denounced judgment, and great severities to all the world of impenitents, even abscission and fire unquenchable. And from this time forward, viz. *From the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.* For now the gospel began to dawn and John was like the morning star, or the blushings springing from the windows of the east, foretelling the approach of the sun of righteousness; and as St. John Baptist laid the first rough, hard and unhewn stone of this building in mortification, self denial, and doing violence to our natural affections: so it was continued by the master builder himself, who propounded the glories of the crown of the heavenly kingdom to them only who should climb the cross to reach it. Now it was that multitudes should throng and crowd to enter in at the strait gate, and press into the kingdom; and the younger brothers

should snatch the inheritance from the elder, the unlikely from the more likely, the Gentiles from the Jews, the strangers from the natives, the publicans and harlots from the Scribes and Pharisees; who like violent persons shall by their importunity, obedience, watchfulness, and diligence snatch the kingdom from them to whom it was first offered; and Jacob shall be loved and Esau rejected.

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Ad. SECT. VIII.

*Considerations of the Preaching of John the Baptist.*

FROM the disputation of Jesus with the doctors to the time of his manifestation to Israel; which was eighteen years, the holy child dwelt in Nazareth in great obedience to his parents, in exemplar modesty, singular humility, working with his hands in his supposed father's trade, for the support of his own and his mother's necessities, and that he might bear the curse of Adam, that in the sweat of his brows he should eat his bread; all the while he increased in favour with God and man, sending forth excellent testimonies of a rare spirit, and a wise understanding in the temperate instances of such a conversation, to which his humility and great obedience had engaged him: But all this while the stream ran under ground, and though little bubblings were discerned in all the course, and all the way men looked upon him as upon an excellent person, diligent in his calling, wise and humble, temperate and just, pious and rarely tempered, yet at the manifestation of John the Baptist he brake forth like the stream from the bowels of the earth, or the sun from a cloud; and gave us precedent that we should not shew our lights to minister to vanity, but then only when God and public order, and just dispositions of men call for a manifestation;

and yet the ages of men have been so forward in prophetic ministries, and to undertake ecclesiastical employment, that the viciousness, and indiscretions, and scandals the church of God feels as great burdens upon the tenderness of her spirit, are in great part owing to the neglect of this instance of the prudence and modesty of the holy Jesus.

But now the time appointed was come, the Baptist comes forth upon the theatre of Palestine, a forerunner of the office and publication of Jesus, and by the great reputation of his sanctity, prevailed upon the affections and judgment of the people, who with much ease believed his doctrine, when they had reason to approve his life; for the good example of the preacher is always the most prevailing homily; his life is his best sermon. He that will raise affections in his auditory must affect their eyes; for we seldom see the people weep if the orator laughs loud and loosely; and there is no reason to think that his discourse should work more with me, than himself. If his arguments be fair and specious, I shall think them fallacies, while they have not faith with him; and what necessity for me to be temperate, when he, that tells me so, sees no such need, but hopes to go to heaven without it? or if the duty be necessary, I shall learn the definition of temperance and the latitudes of my permission, and the bounds of lawful and unlawful by the exposition of his practice; if he binds a burden upon my shoulders, it is but reason I should look him to bear his portion too. "Good works convince more than miracles;" and the power of ejecting devils is not so great probation, that Christian religion came from God, as is the holiness of the doctrine, and its efficacy and productions upon the hearty professors of the institution. S. Pachomius, when he wore the military girdle under Constantine the emperor, came to a city of Christians, who having

▪ S. Chrys. orat. de S. Babylâ.

heard that the army in which he then marched was almost starved for want of necessary provisions, of their own charity relieved them speedily and freely; he wondering at their so free and cheerful dispensation, enquired what kind of people these were, whom he saw so bountiful? It was answered they were Christians, whose profession it is to hurt no man, and to do good to every man; the pleased soldier was convinced of the excellency of that religion, which brought forth men so good and so pious, and loved the mother for the children's sake, threw away his girdle, and became Christian, and religious, and a saint: and it was Tertullian's great argument in behalf of Christians; "see how they love one another, how every man is ready to die for his brother;" it was a living argument and a sensible demonstration of the purity of the fountain, from whence such limpid waters did derive. But so John the Baptist made himself a fit instrument of preparation, and so must all the Christian clergy be fitted for the dissemination of the gospel of Jesus.

The Baptist had till this time, that is, about thirty years, lived in the wilderness under the discipline of the Holy Ghost, under the tuition of angels, in conversation with God, in great mortification and disaffections to the world, his garments rugged and uneasy, his meat plain, necessary, and without variety, his employment prayers and devotion, his company wild beasts in ordinary, in extraordinary, messengers from heaven; and all this not undertaken of necessity, to subdue a bold lust, or to punish a loud crime, but to become more holy and pure from the lesser stains and insinuations of too free infirmities, and to prepare himself for the great ministry of serving the holy Jesus in his publication. Thirty years he lived in great austerity; and it was a rare patience and exemplar mortification; we use not to be so pertinacious in any pious resolutions, but our purposes disband upon the sense of the first violence; we are free and confi-

dent of resolving to fast when our bellies are full <sup>a</sup>but when we are called upon by the first necessities of nature, our zeal is cool, and dissoluble into air upon the first temptation; and we are not upheld in the violences of a short austerity, without faintings and repentances to be repented of, and enquirings after the vow is past, and searching for excuses and desires to reconcile our nature and our conscience; unless our necessity be great, and our sin clamorous, and our conscience loaden, and no peace to be had without it; and it is well if upon any reasonable grounds we can be brought to suffer contradictions of nature, for the advantages of grace; but it would be remembered that the Baptist did more upon a less necessity, and possibly the greatness of the example may entice us on a little further, than the customs of the world, or our own indevotions would engage us.

But after the expiration of a definite time, John came forth from his solitude, and served God in societies; he served God, and the content of his own spirit by his conversing with angels and dialogues with God, so long as he was in the wilderness, and it might be some trouble to him to mingle with the impurities of men, amongst whom he was sure to observe such recesses from perfection, such violation of all things sacred, so great despight done to all ministries of religion, that to him who had no experience or neighbourhood of actions criminal, it must needs be to his sublimed and clarified spirit more punitive and afflictive, than his hair-shirt and his ascetick diet was to his body; but now himself, that tried both, was best able to judge which state of life was of greatest advantage and perfection.

<sup>b</sup> "In his solitude he did breathe more pure inspiration, heaven was more open, God was more familiar," and frequent in his visitations; in the wilder-

<sup>a</sup> Satiatis et expletis jucundius est carere quam frui. *Cicer. de senect.*

<sup>b</sup> In solitudine aer purior, cœlum apertius, familiarior Deus. *Origen.*

ness his company was angels, his employment meditations and prayer; his temptations simple and from within, from the impotent and lesser rebellions of a mortified body; his occasions of sin as few as his examples; his condition such, that if his soul were at all busy, his life could not easily be other than the life of angels; for his work and recreation, and his visits, and his retirements could be nothing but the variety and differing circumstances of his piety; his inclinations to society made it necessary for him to repeat his addresses to God; for his being a sociable creature, and yet in solitude, made that his conversing with God, and being partaker of divine communications, should be the satisfaction of his natural desires, and the supply of his singularity and retirement; the discomforts of which made it natural for him to seek out for some refreshment, and therefore to go to heaven for it, he having rejected the solaces of the world already; and all this, besides the innocences of his silence, which is very great, and to be judged of in proportion to the infinite extravagancies of our language, there being no greater perfection here to be expected, than not to offend in our tongue. “It was solitude and retirement in which Jesus kept his vigils, the desert places heard him pray, in a privacy he was born, in the wilderness he fed his thousands, upon a mountain apart he was transfigured, upon a mountain he died, and from a mountain he ascended to his Father;” in which retirements his devotion certainly did receive the advantage of convenient circumstances, and himself in such dispositions twice had the opportunities of glory.

And yet after all these excellencies, the spirit of God called the Baptist forth to a more excellent ministry; for in solitude pious persons might go to heaven by the way of prayers and devotion, but in so-

<sup>a</sup> πολλοῖς γὰρ ἀνθρώποις φάρμακον κακῶν σιγή, μέλιτα δ' ἐστὶ σάφρον. τρέψω σημεῖον.  
Carcinus. <sup>b</sup> James 3. <sup>c</sup> Petrus Cellensis, l. 4. ep. 12.



ciety they might go to heaven by the way of mercy and charity, and dispensations to others. In solitude there are fewer occasions of vices, but there is also the exercise of fewer virtues; and the temptations, though they be not from many objects, yet are in some circumstances more dangerous, not only because the worst of evils, spiritual pride does seldom miss to creep upon those goodly oaks, like ivy, and suck their heart out; and a great mortifier without some complacencies in himself, or affectations, or opinions, or something of singularity, is almost as unusual, <sup>a</sup> as virgin purity and unstained thoughts in the Bordelli, (S. Hierom had tried it and found it so by experience, and he it was that said so) but also because whatsoever temptation does invade such retired persons, they have privacies enough to act it in, <sup>b</sup> and no eyes upon them but the eye of heaven; no shame to encounter withal, no fears of being discovered: and we know by experience, that a witness of our conversation is a great restraint to the inordination of our actions; <sup>c</sup> men seek out darknesses and secrecies to commit a sin; and the evil that no man sees, no man reproves, and that makes the temptation bold and confident, and the iniquity easy and ready: So that as they have not so many tempters as they have abroad, so neither have they so many restraints: their vices are not so many, but they are more dangerous in themselves, and to the world safe and opportune; and as they communicate less with the world, so they do less charity, and fewer offices of mercy; no sermons there but when solitude is made popular, and the city removes into the wilderness; no comforts of a public religion, or visible remonstrances of the communion of saints; and of all the kinds of spiritual

<sup>a</sup> In solitudine cito obrepit superbia. *ep. 4.* <sup>b</sup> Non minorem flagitiis occasionem secreta præbuerint. *Quint.* <sup>c</sup> Maxima pars peccatorum tollitur si peccaturis testis assistat. *Seneca. S. Bernard.* Malum quod nemo videt, nemo arguit; ubi non timetur reprehensor, securius accedit tentator, et liberius perpetratur iniquitas.

mercy, only one can there properly be exercised, and of the corporal none at all: And this is true in lives and institutions of less retirement, in proportion to the degree of the solitude; and therefore church story reports of divers very holy persons, who left their wildernesses, and sweetnesses of devotion in their retirement, to serve God in public by the ways of charity and exterior offices. <sup>a</sup> Thus S. Anthony and Apepsamas came forth to encourage the fainting people to contend to death for the crown of martyrdom, and Aphraates in the time of Valens, the Arian emperor, came abroad to assist the church in the suppressing the flames kindled by the Arian faction. And upon this ground they that are the greatest admirers of hermetical life, call the episcopal function <sup>b</sup> the state of perfection, and a degree of ministerial and honorary excellency beyond the pieties and contemplations of solitude, because of the advantages of gaining souls, and religious conversation, and going to God by doing good to others.

John the Baptist united both these lives, and our blessed Saviour, who is the great precedent of sanctity and prudence, hath determined this question in his own instance; for he lived a life common, sociable, humane, charitable, and public, and yet for the opportunities of especial devotion retired to prayer and contemplation, but came forth speedily; for the devil never set upon him, but in the wilderness, and by the advantage of retirement. For as God hath many, so the devil hath some opportunities of doing his work in our solitariness: but Jesus reconciled both, and <sup>c</sup> so did John the Baptist in several degrees and manners, and from both we are taught, that solitude is a good school, and the world is the best theatre; the institution is best there, but the practice here; the

<sup>a</sup> Euseb. hist. lib. 6. c. 3. Theod. 1. 4. c. 23, 24.

<sup>b</sup> Nihil est illi principi Deo qui omnem hunc mundum regit, quod quidem in terris fiat, acceptius, quam consilia coetusq; hominum jure sociali, quæ civitates appellantur. *Cicer som. Scipion.*

<sup>c</sup> ὁ ἰωάννης φιλόρημος, ὁ ἰησοῦς ἡμερῶν ὁ τριτάτος καὶ ἀγέλατος.

wilderness hath the advantage of discipline, and society opportunities of perfection. Privacy is the best for devotion, and the public for clarity. In both God hath many saints and servants, and from both the devil hath had some.

His sermon was an exhortation to repentance, and an holy life, he gave particular schedules of duty to several states of persons, sharply reprov'd the Pharisees, for their hypocrisy and impiety, it being worse in them because contrary to their rule, their profession and institution: gently guided others into the ways of righteousness, calling them the straight ways of the Lord, that is, the direct and shortest way to the kingdom, for of all lines the straight is the shortest, and as every angle is a turning out of the way, so ever sin is an obliquity, and interrupts the journey. By such discourses and a baptism, he dispos'd the spirits of men for the entertaining the Messias, and the homilies of the gospel. For John's doctrine was to the sermons of Jesus, as a preface, to a discourse; and his baptism was to the new institution and discipline of the kingdom, as the vigils to a holiday, of the same kind in a less degree. But the whole economy of it represents to us, that repentance is the first intromission into the sanctities of Christian religion. The Lord treads upon no paths that are not hallowed, and made smooth by the sorrows and cares of contrition, and the impediments of sin cleared by dereliction, and the succeeding fruits of emendation. But as it related to the Jews, his baptism did signify by a cognation to their usual rites and ceremonies of ablution and washing Gentile proselytes, that the Jews had so far receded from their duty, and that holiness which God required of them by the law, that they were in the state of strangers, no better than heathens, and therefore were to be treated, as themselves received gentle proselytes, by a baptism, and a new state of life, before they could be fit for the reception of the Messias, or be admitted to his kingdom.

It was an excellent sweetness of religion that had entirely possessed the soul of the Baptist, that in so great reputation of sanctity, so mighty concourse of people, such great multitudes of disciples and confidants, and such throngs of admirers, he was humble without mixtures of vanity, and confirmed in his temper and piety against the strength of the most impetuous temptation. And he was tried to some purpose, for when he was tempted to confess himself to be the Christ, he refused it, or to be Elias, or to be accounted that prophet, he refused all such great appellatives, and confessed himself only to be a voice, the lowest of entities, whose being depends upon the speaker, just as himself did upon the pleasure of God, receiving form, and publication, and employment wholly by the will of his Lord, in order to the manifestation of the word eternal. It were well that the spirits of men would not arrogate more than their own, though they did not lessen their own just dues. It may concern some end of piety, or prudence, that our reputation be preserved by all just means, but never that we assume the dues of others, or grow vain by the spoils of an undeserved dignity. Honours are the rewards of virtue, or engagement upon offices of trouble and public use; but then they must suppose a preceding worth, or a fair employment. But he that is a plagiary of other's titles or offices, and dresses himself with their beauties, hath no more solid worth or reputation, than he should have nutriment, if he eat only with their mouth, and slept their slumbers, himself being open and unbound in all the regions of his senses.

#### THE PRAYER.

O HOLY and most glorious God, who before the publication of thy eternal Son, the prince of peace, didst send thy servant John Baptist, by the examples of mortification, and the rude austerities of a peniten-

tial life, and by the sermons of penance to remove all the impediments of sin, that the ways of his Lord and ours might be made clear, ready, and expedite; be pleased to let thy holy spirit lead me in the strait paths of sanctity, without deflexions to either hand, and without the interruption of deadly sin, that I may with facility, zeal, assiduity, and a persevering diligence walk in the ways of the Lord; be pleased that the axe may be laid to the root of sin, that the whole body of it may be cut down in me, that no fruit of Sodom may grow up to thy displeasure. Thoroughly purge the floor and granary of my heart with thy fan, with the breath of thy diviner spirit, that it may be a holy repository of graces, and full of benediction and sanctity, that when our Lord shall come, I may at all time be prepared for the entertainment of so divine a guest, apt to lodge him, and to feast him, that he may for ever delight to dwell with me. And make me also to dwell with him, sometimes retiring into his recesses and private rooms by contemplation, and admiring of his beauties, and beholding the secrets of his kingdom, and at all other times walking in the courts of the Lord's house, by the diligencies and labours of repentance, and a holy life, till thou shalt please to call me to a nearer communication of thy excellencies, which then grant, when by thy gracious assistances, I shall have done thy works, and glorified thy holy name, by the strict and never failing purposes and proportionable endeavours of religion and holiness, through the merits and mercies of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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#### DISCOURSE IV.

##### *Of Mortification and corporal Austerities.*

FROM the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by

force," said our blessed Saviour. For now that the new covenant was to be made with man, repentance which is so great a part of it, being in very many actions a punitive duty, afflictive and vindicative, from the days of the Baptist, (who first, by office and solemnity of design, published this doctrine,) violence was done to the inclinations and dispositions of man, and by such violences we were to be possessed of the kingdom. And his example was the best commentary upon his text, he did violence to himself, he lived a life in which the rudenesses of camel's hair, and the lowest nutriment of flies, and honey of the desert, his life of singularity, his retirement from the sweetnesses of society, his resisting the greatest of tentations, and despising to assume false honours, were instances of that violence, and explications of the doctrine of self-denial and mortification, which are the pedestal of the cross, and the supporters of Christianity, as it distinguishes from all laws, religions, and institutions of the world.

Mortification is the one half of Christianity: it is a dying to the world, it is a denying of the will and all its natural desires: \* "an abstinence from pleasure and sensual complacencies, that the flesh being subdued to the spirit, both may join in the service of God, and in the offices of holy religion. It consists in actions of severity and renunciation, it refuses to give entertainment to any vanity, nor uses a freer license in things lawful, lest it be tempted to things unlawful; it kills the lusts of the flesh by taking away its fuel, and incentives; and by using to contradict its appetite, does inure it with more facility to obey the superior faculties; and in effect it is nothing but a great care we sin not, and a prudent and severe using such remedies and instruments which in nature and grace are made apt for the production of our purpo-

\* Τὴν ἐπὶ καθαρίσει τῷ φρονήματι τῆς σαρκὸς πρὸς τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δουλείαν ἀποχρῶν τῶν ἡδονῶν. *S. Basil.*

ses. And it consists in interior and exterior offices; these being but instruments of the interior, as the body is organical or instrumental to the soul, and no part of the duty itself, but as they are advantages to the end, the mortification of the spirit; which by whatsoever means we have once acquired, and does continue; we are disobliged from all other exterior severities, unless by accident they become to be obligatory, and from some other cause.

Mortification of the will or the spirit of man, that is the duty; that the will of man may humbly obey God, and absolutely rule its inferior faculties; that the inordinations of our natural desires, begun by Adam's sin, and continued and increased by our continuing evil customs may be again placed in the right order, that since many of the divine precepts are restraints upon our natural desires, we should so deny those appetites, that covet after natural satisfactions, that they may not serve themselves by disserving God. For therefore our own wills are our greatest dangers, and our greatest enemies, because they tend to courses contradictory to God. God commands us to be humble; our own desires are to be great, considerable, and high; and we are never secure enough from contempt, unless we can place our neighbours at our feet; here therefore we must deny our will, and appetites of greatness for the purchase of humility. God commands temperance and chastity; our desires and natural promptness breaks the bonds asunder, and entertains dissolutions to the licentiousness of Apicius, or the wantonness of a Mahometan paradise; sacrificing meat and drink offerings to our appetites, as if our stomachs were the temples of Bel; and making women and the opportunities of lust to be our dwelling, and our employment, even beyond the common loosenesses of entertainment. Here therefore we must deny our own wills, our appetites of gluttony and drunkenness, and our prurient beastly inclinations for the purchase of temperance and

chastity. And every other virtue is, either directly or by accident, a certain instance of this great duty, which is, like a Catholicon, purgative of all distemperatures, and is the best preparative and disposition to prayer in the world.

For it is a sad consideration, and of secret reason, that since prayer of all duties is certainly the sweetest and the easiest, it having in it no difficulty or vexatious labour, no weariness of bones, no dimness of eyes, or hollow cheeks, is directly consequent to it, no natural desires of contradictory quality, nothing of disease, but much of comfort and more of hope in it; yet we are infinitely averse from it, weary of its length, glad of an occasion to pretermitt our offices, and yet there is no visible cause of such indisposition; nothing in the nature of the thing nor, in the circumstances necessarily appendant to the duty. Something is amiss in us, and it wanted a name till the spirit of God by enjoining us the duty of mortification, hath taught us to know that immortification of spirit is the cause of all our secret and spiritual indispositions: we are so incorporated to the desires of sensual objects, that we feel no relish or gust of the spiritual. It is as if a lion should eat hay, or an ox venison, there is no proportion between the object and the appetite, till by mortification of our first desires, our wills are made spiritual, and our apprehensions supernatural and clarified. For as a cook told Dionysius the tyrant, the black broth of Lacedæmon would not do well at Syracuse, unless it be tasted by a Spartan's palate; so neither can the excellencies of heaven be discerned, but by a spirit disrelishing the sottish appetites of the world, and accustomed to diviner banquets: and this was mystically signified by the two altars in Solomon's temple, in the outer court whereof beasts were sacrificed, in the inner court an altar of incense: the first representing mortification or slaying of our beastly appetites; the second the offering up our prayers, which are not likely to be-



come a pleasant offertory, unless our impurities be removed by the atonement made by the first sacrifices; without our spirit be mortified, we neither can love to pray, nor God love to hear us.

But there are three steps to ascend to this altar. 1. The first is to abstain from satisfying our carnal desires in the instances of sin; and although the furnace flames with vehement emissions at some times, yet to walk in the midst of the burning without being consumed, like the children of the captivity; that is the duty even of the most imperfect, and is commonly the condition of those good persons, whose interest in secular employments speaks fair, and solicits often, and tempts highly; yet they manage their affairs with habitual justice, and a constant charity; and are temperate in their daily meals, chaste in the solaces of marriage, and pure in their spirits, unmingled with sordid affections in the midst of their possessions and enjoyments. These men are in the world, but they are strangers here; *<sup>a</sup> They have a city, <sup>b</sup> but not an abiding one; <sup>c</sup> they are proselytes of the house,* but have made no covenant with the world. For though they desire with secular desires, yet it is but for necessities, and then they are content; they use the creatures with freedom, and modesty; but never to intemperance and transgression; so that their hands are below tied there by the necessities of their life; but their hearts are above, lifted up by the abstractions of this first degree of mortification. And this is the first and nicest distinction between a man of the world, and a man of God; for this state is a denying our affections nothing but the sin, it enjoys as much of the world, as may be consistent with the possibilities of heaven: a little less than this is the state of immortification, and a being in the flesh, which (saith the apostle) cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The flesh must first be separated, and the

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 11. 13.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Tim. 6. 8.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. 5. 6.

adherencies pared off from the skin, before the parchment be fit to make a schedule for use, or to transmit a record; whatsoever in the sense of the scripture is flesh, or an enemy to the spirit, if it be not rescinded and mortified, makes that the laws of God cannot be written in our hearts. This is the doctrine S. Paul taught the church: *“For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”* This first mortification is the way of life, if it continues: but its continuance is not secured, till we are advanced towards life by one degree more of this death. For this condition is a state of a daily, and dangerous warfare, and many inroads are made by sin, and many times hurt is done and booty carried off: for he that is but thus far mortified, although his dwelling be within the kingdom of grace, yet it is in the borders of it, and hath a dangerous neighbourhood. If we mean to be safe, we must remove into the heart of the land, or carry the war further off.

2. We must not only be strangers here, but we must be dead too, dead unto the world, that is, we must not only deny our vices, but our passions; <sup>b</sup> not only contradict the direct immediate persuasion to a sin, but also cross the inclination to it. So long as our appetites are high and full, we shall never have peace or safety, but the dangers and insecurities of a full war, and a potent enemy; we are always disputing the question, ever struggling for life: but when our passions are killed, when our desires are little and low, then grace reigns, then our life is hid with Christ in God, then we have fewer interruptions in the way of righteousness, then we are not so apt to be surprised by sudden eruptions and transportation of passions, and our piety itself is more prudent and reasonable, chosen with a freer election, discerned

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 8. 13.  
crexerit! Senec.

<sup>b</sup> O quam contempta res est homo, nisi super humana sp

with clearer understanding, hath more in it of judgment than of fancy, and is more spiritual and angelical. He that is apt to be angry, though he be habitually careful, and full of observation, that he sin not, may at some time or other be surprised, when his guards are undiligent, and without actual expectation of an enemy: but if his anger be dead in him, and the inclination lessened to the indifferency and gentleness of a child, the man dwells safe, because of the impotency of his enemy, or that he is reduced to obedience, or hath taken conditions of peace. He that hath refused to consent to actions of uncleanness to which he was strongly tempted, hath won a victory by fine force, God hath blessed him well; but an opportunity may betray him instantly, and the sin may be in upon him unawares; unless also his desires be killed, he is betrayed by a party within. David was a holy person, but he was surprised by the sight of Bathsheba, for his freer use of permitted beds had kept the fire alive, which was apt to be put into a flame when so fair a beauty reflected through his eyes. But Joseph was a virgin, and had kept under all his inclinations to looser thoughts; opportunity, and command, and violence, and beauty did make no breach upon his spirit.

He that is in the first state of pilgrimage, does not mutiny against his superiors, nor publish their faults, nor envy their dignities; but he that is dead to the world, sees no fault that they have, and when he hears an objection, he buries it in an excuse, and rejoices in the dignity of their persons. Every degree of mortification endures reproof without murmur; but he that is quite dead to the world and to his own will, feels no regret against it, and hath no secret thoughts of trouble and unwillingness to the suffering, save only that he is sorry he deserved it. "For so a dead body resists not your violence, changes not its posture you placed it in, strikes not his striker, is not moved by your words, nor provok

ed by your scorn, nor is troubled when you shrink with horror at the sight of it; only it will hold the head downward in all its situations, unless it be hindred by violence:" and a mortified spirit is such, without indignation against scorn, without revenge against injuries, without murmuring at low offices, not impatient in troubles, indifferent in all accidents, neither transported with joy, nor depressed with sorrow, and is humble in all his thoughts. And thus <sup>a</sup> *he that is dead* (saith the apostle) *is justified from sins*. And this is properly a state of life, in which by the grace of Jesus we are restored to a condition of order and interior beauty in our faculties, our actions are made moderate and humane, our spirits are even, and our understandings undisturbed.

For passions of the sensitive soul are like an exhalation, hot and dry, born up from the earth upon the wings of a cloud, and detained by violence out of its place, causing thunders, and making eruptions into lightening and sudden fires. There is a tempest in the soul of a passionate man, and though every wind does not shake the earth, nor rend trees up by the roots, yet we call it violent and ill weather, if it only makes a noise and is harmless. And it is an inordination in the spirit of a man when his passions are tumultuous and mighty, though they do not determine directly upon a sin; they discompose his peace and disturb his spirit, and make it like troubled waters, in which no man can see his own figure, and just proportions; and therefore by being less a man, cannot be so much a christian, in the midst of so great dispositions. For although the cause may hallow the passion (and if a man be very angry for God's cause, it is zeal, not fury) yet the cause cannot secure the person from violence, transportation, and inconvenience. <sup>b</sup> When Elisha was consulted by three Kings

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 6, 7.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings 3, 13.

concerning the success of their present expedition, he grew so angry against idolatrous Joram, and was carried on to so great degrees of disturbance, that when for Jehoshaphat's sake he was content to enquire of the Lord, he called for a minstrel who by his harmony might recompose his disunited and troubled spirit, that so he might be apter for divination. And sometimes this zeal goes besides the intention of the man, and beyond the degrees of prudent or lawful, and engages in a sin, though at first it was zeal for religion. For so it happened in Moses, at the waters of Massah and Meribah, he spake foolishly, and yet it was when he was zealous for God, and extremely careful for the people's interest. For his passion he was hindered from entering into the land of promise. And we also if we be not moderate and well tempered, even in our passions for God, may, like Moses, break the tables of the law and throw them out of our hands with zeal to have them preserved; for passion violently snatches at the conclusion, but is inconsiderate and incurious concerning the premises. The sum and purpose of this discourse is that saying of our blessed Saviour, *He that will be my disciple must deny himself*, that is, not only desires that are sinful, but desires that are his own, pursuances of his own affections, and violent motions, though to things not evil, or in themselves contagious.

3. And yet there is a degree of mortification of spirit beyond this; for the condition of our security may require, that we not only deny to act our temptations, or to please our natural desires, but also to seek opportunities of doing displeasure to our affections, and violence to our inclinations; and not only to be indifferent, but to choose a contradiction and a denial to our strongest appetites, to rejoice in a trouble; and this was the spirit of St. Paul *I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations, and we glory in it*: which joy

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 16, 24.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. 7, 4. Rom. 5, 3.

consists not in any sensitive pleasure any man can take in afflictions and adverse accidents, but in despising the present inconveniences, and looking through the cloud unto those great felicities, and graces, and consignations to glory, which are the effects of the cross. <sup>a</sup> *Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed;* that was the incentive of St. Paul's joy; and therefore as it may consist with any degree of mortification to pray for the taking away of the cross, upon condition it may consist with God's glory, and our ghostly profit; so it is properly an act of this virtue to pray for the cross, or to meet it, if we understand it may be for the interest of the spirit. And thus St. Basil prayed to God to remove his violent pains of head-ach; but when God heard him, and took away his pain, and lust came in place of it, he prayed to God to restore him his headach again; that cross was gain and joy, when the removal of it was so full of danger and temptation: and this the masters of spiritual life called being crucified with Christ; because as Christ chose the death, and desired it by the appetites of the spirit, though his flesh smarted under it, and groaned and died with the burthen; so do all that are thus mortified, they place misfortunes and sadnesses amongst things eligible, and set them before the eyes of their desire: although the flesh, and the desires of sense are factious and bold against such sufferings.

Of these three degrees of interior or spiritual mortification, the first is duty, the second is counsel, and the third is perfection; we sin if we have not the first, we are in danger without the second, but without the third we cannot be perfect as our heavenly Father is; but shall have more of human infirmities to be ashamed of, than can be excused by the accrescencies and

<sup>a</sup> 2 Cor. 7, 4. Rom. 5, 9.

condition of our nature: \* the first is only of absolute necessity; the second is prudent, and of greatest convenience: but the third is excellent and perfect. And it was the consideration of a wise man, that the saints in heaven, who understand the excellent glories and vast differences of state, and capacities amongst beatified persons, although they have no envy nor sorrows, yet if they were upon earth with the same notion and apprehensions they have in heaven, would not for all the world lose any degree of glory; but mortify to the greatest eminency, that their glory may be a derivation of the greatest ray of light: every degree being of compensation glorious, and disproportionably beyond the inconsiderable troubles of the greatest self denial. God's purpose is, that we abstain from sin; there is no more in the commandment; and therefore we must deny ourselves, so as not to admit a sin, under pain of a certain and eternal curse; <sup>b</sup> but the other degrees of mortification are by accident so many degrees of virtue; not being enjoined or counselled for themselves, but for the preventing of crimes, and for securities of good life; and therefore are parts and offices of Christian prudence, which whosoever shall positively reject, is neither much in love with virtue, nor careful of his own safety.

2. But mortification hath also some designs upon the body. For the body is the shop, and forge of the soul, in which all her designs which are transient upon external objects, are framed; and it is a good servant as long as it is kept in obedience, and under discipline, *c but he that breeds his servant delicately, will find him contumacious and troublesome*, bold and confident, as his son; and therefore St. Paul's prac-

\* Κάθαρσις μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης ἀλογίας ἢ τῷ στυλιδῷ σίμαλῳ· τελειότες δὲ τῆς ὕλης ἐυζωίας ἀνάληψις πρὸς τὴν θεῖαν ὁμοίωσιν ὑπαγάγους· ταῦτα δὲ πρὸς αὐτὴν ἢ ἀληθεῖα μάλα καὶ ἀπεργάζεσθαι· ἡ μὲν ἀμείριον τῶν παθῶν ἐξορίζουσα, ἡ δὲ τὸ θεῖον εὐδῶ ἐυζωίας ἔχουσα προσκοιμῆται. Hierocl. in Pythag.

<sup>b</sup> S. Bonavent. Tantam gloriam omni hora negligimus, quant a bona interim facere possemus, si otiose eam transigimus.

<sup>c</sup> Prov. 29, 21.

tise (as himself gives account of it) *<sup>a</sup> was to keep his body under, and bring it into subjection, lest he should become a castaway*; for the desires of the body are in the same things, in which themselves are satisfied, so many injuries to the soul; because upon every one of the appetites a restraint is made, and a law placed for sentinel, that if we transgress the bounds fixed by the divine commandment, it becomes a sin: now it is hard for us to keep them within compass, because they are little more than agents merely natural, and therefore cannot interrupt their act, but covet and desire as much as they can without suspension or coercion, but what comes from without, which is therefore the more troublesome; because all such restraints are against nature, and without sensual pleasure. And therefore this is that, that St. Paul said, *<sup>b</sup> when we were in the flesh the passions of sins which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death*. For these pleasures of the body draw us as loadstones draw iron, not for love, but for prey and nutriment; it feeds upon the iron, as the bodily pleasures upon the life of the spirit, which is lessened, and impaired according as the gusts of the flesh grow high and sapid.

<sup>c</sup> He that feeds a lion must obey him, unless he make his den to be his prison: our lusts are as wild, and as cruel beasts, and unless they feel the load of fetters and of laws, will grow unruly and troublesome, and increase upon us, as we give them food and satisfaction; he that is used to drink high wines, is sick if he hath not his proportion to what degree soever his custom hath brought his appetite; and to some men temperance becomes certain death, because the inordination of their desires hath introduced a custom, and custom hath increased those appetites, and made them almost natural in their degree; but

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 9. 27. Rom. 6, 4. Heb. 12, 2. 1 Pet. 2, 1, and 4, 1.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. 7, 5.

<sup>c</sup> Αἰσχροὶν τῶν μὲν οὐκιστῶν ἄρχουσιν, ταῖς δὲ ἡδοναῖς δουλοῦναι. Isocra. ad Demonic.



he that hath been used to hard diet, and the pure stream, his refreshments are much within the limits of temperance, and his desires as moderate as his diet. St. Jerom affirms, "that to be continent in the state of widowhood is harder than to keep our virgin pure:" and there is reason, that then the appetite should be harder to be restrained, when it hath not been accustomed to be denyed, but satisfied in its freer solicitations. When a fontinel is once opened, all the symbolical humours run thither, and issue out, and it is not to be stopped without danger, unless the humour be purged or diverted: so is the satisfaction of an impure desire, it opens the issue and makes way for the emanation of all impurity, and unless the desire be mortified, will not be stopped by purposes and easy desires.

Since therefore the body is the instrument of sins, the fuel and the incentive, our mortification must reach thither also, at least in some degrees, or it will be to small purpose to think of mortifying our spirit in some instances of temptation. In vain does that man think to keep his honour and chastity that invites his lust to an activeness by soft beds and high diet, and idleness, and opportunity; make the soul's instrument unapt and half the work is done. And this is true in all instances of carnality or natural desires; whose scene lies in the lower region of passions and are acted by the body; but the operation of the cure must be in proportion to the design; as the mortification of the spirit is in several degrees, so the mortification of the body also hath its several parts of prudence, injunction, and necessity. For the prescribing all sorts of mortification corporal, indefinitely and indiscriminately to all persons, without separation of their ends, and distinct capacities, is a snare to men's consciences, makes religion impertinently troublesome, occasions some men to glory in corporal austerity, as if of itself it were an act of piety, and a distinction of the man from the more imperfect per-

sons of the world, and is all the way unreasonable and inartificial.

1. \* Therefore such whose engagements in the world or capacities of person confine them to the lowest and first step of mortification, those who fight only for life and liberty, nor for privileges and honour, that are in perpetual contestation and close fightings with sin, it is necessary that their body also be mortified in such a degree, that their desires transport them not beyond the permissions of divine and human laws: let such men be strict in the rules of temperance and sobriety, be chaste within the laws of marriage, cherish their body to preserve their health, and their health to serve God, and to do their offices: to these persons the best instruments of discipline are the strict laws of temperance, denying all transgressions of the appetite boiling over its margin and proper limit, assiduous prayer and observation of the public laws of fasting, which are framed so moderate and even, as to be proportionable to the common manner of living of persons secular and incumbered. For though many persons of common employments and even manner of living have in the midst of worldly avocations undertaken austerities very rude and rigorous, yet it was in order to a higher mortification of spirit; and it is also necessary they should, if either naturally, and habitually, or easily they suffer violent transportation of passions: for since the occasions of anger or disturbance in the world frequently occur, if such passions be not restrained by greater violence, than is competent to the ordinary offices of a moderate piety, the cure is weaker than the humour, and so leaves the work imperfect.

- \* *Hæc epulæ vicisse famem, magnique penates  
 Summovisse hyemem tecto, pretiosaque vestis  
 Hirtam membra super Romani more Quiritis  
 Induxisse togam.* —————  
*De Catone dixit Lucanus; et de eodem:  
 Intonsus rigidam in frontem descendere canos  
 Passus erat, moestamque genis increascere barbam.*

2. But this is coincident to the second degree of mortification, for if either out of desire of a farther step towards perfection, or out of the necessities of nature or evil customs it be necessary also to subdue our passions as well as the direct invitations to sin, in both these cases the body must suffer more austerities, even such as directly are contrariant to every passionate disturbance, though it be not ever sinful in the instance. All mortifiers must abstain from every thing that is unlawful, but these, that they may abstain from things unlawful, must also deny to themselves satisfaction in things lawful and pleasant; and this is in a just proportion to the end, the subduing the passions, lest their liberty and boldness become licentious. And we shall easier deny their importunity to sin, when we will not please them in those things in which we may: such in which the fear of God, and the danger of our souls, and the convictions of reason and religion do not immediately co-operate. And this was the practice of David, when he had thirsted for the waters of Bethlehem, and some of his worthies ventured their lives and brought it, he refused to drink it, but poured <sup>a</sup>*it upon the ground unto the Lord*, that is, *it became a drink-offering unto the Lord*: an acceptable oblation, in which he sacrificed his desires to God, denying himself the satisfaction of such a desire, which was natural and innocent, save that it was something nice, delicate and curious. <sup>b</sup>Like this was the act of the fathers in the mountain Nitria, to one of which a fair cluster of dried grapes being sent, he refused to taste them, lest he should be too sensual and much pleased, but sent them to another, and he to a third, and the same consideration transmitted the present through all their cells, till it came to the first man again: all of them not daring to content their appetite in a thing too much desired, lest the like importunity in the instance of a sin should

<sup>a</sup> 2 Sam. 23. 17.<sup>b</sup> Apud Pallad. in histor. Lausiæ.

prevail upon them. To these persons the best instruments of discipline are subtraction rather than imposition of austerities; let them be great haters of corporal pleasures, eating for necessity; diet spare and cheap; abridging and making short the opportunities of natural and permitted solaces, <sup>a</sup> refusing exterior comforts, not choosing the most pleasant object, not suffering delight to be the end of eating, and therefore separating delight from it, as much as prudently they may, not being too importunate with God to remove his gentler hand of paternal correction, but inuring ourselves to patient suffering, and indifferent acceptance of the cross that God lays upon us; at no hand living delicately, or curiously, or impatiently. And this was the condition of S. Paul, suffering with excellent temper all those persecutions and inconveniencies, which the enemies of religion loaded him withal; which he called <sup>b</sup> *bearing the marks of the Lord Jesus in his body*; and *carrying about in his body the dying or mortification of the Lord Jesus*: it was in the matter of persecution, which because he bore patiently, and was accustomed to, and he accepted with indifference and renunciation, they were the mortifications and the marks of Jesus, that is, a true conformity to the passion of Christ, and of great effect and interest for the preventing sins by the mortification of his natural desires.

3. But in the pale of the church there are and have been many tall cedars, whose tops have reached to heaven; some there are, that chuse afflictions of the body, that by turning the bent and inclination of their affections into sensual displeasures, they may not only cut off all pretensions of temptation, but grow in spiritual graces, and perfections intellectual and beautified. To this purpose they served themselves with the instances of sackcloth, hard lodging, long fasts,

<sup>a</sup> Quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit,  
A Diis plura feret. *Hor.*

<sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. 4. 10. Gal. 6. 17.

pernoctation in prayers, renunciation of all secular possessions, great and expensive charity, bodily labours to great weariness and affliction, and many other prodigies of voluntary suffering, which scripture and the ecclesiastical stories do frequently mention. S. Lewis, King of France wore sackcloth every day, unless sickness hindered; and S. Zenobius as long as he was a bishop. And when Severus Sulpicius sent a sackcloth to S. Paulinus, bishop of Nola, he returned to him a letter of thanks, and discoursed piously concerning the use of corporal austerities: <sup>a</sup>and that I need not instance, it was so general, that this was by way of appropriation called the garment of the church, because of the frequent use of such instruments of exterior mortification: and so it was in other instances. S. James neither eat flesh, nor drank wine, S. Matthew lived upon acorns, seeds, and herbs; and amongst the elder Christians, some rolled themselves naked in snows, some upon thorns, some on burning coals, some chewed bitter pills, and masticated gums, and sipped frequently on horrid potions, and wore iron upon their skin, and bolts upon their legs, and in witty torments excelled the cruelty of many of their persecutors, whose rage determined quickly in death, and had certainly less of torment, than the tedious afflictions and rude penances of Simeon surnamed Stylites. But as all great examples have excellencies above the ordinary devoutness of good people, so have they some danger and much consideration.

1. Therefore I consider, that these bodily and voluntary self-afflictions can only be of use in carnal and natural temptations, of no use in spiritual: for ascetic diet, hard lodging, and severe disciplines, cannot be directly operative upon the spirit, but only by mediation of the body, by abating its extravagancies, by

<sup>a</sup> *Deposuerunt sæculi byssum, et sumpserunt ecclesiæ vestimentum, quod est cilicium. Ruricius, ep. 20. Euseb. l. 2. hist. c. 22. Clem. Alex. Paedog. l. 2. c. 17.*

subtracting its maintenance, by lessening its temptations; these may help to preserve the soul chaste, or temperate, because the scene of these sins lies in the body, and thence they have their maintenance, and from thence also may receive their <sup>a</sup> abatements; but in actions, which are less material, such as pride, and envy, and blasphemy, and impenitence, and all the kinds and degrees of malice, external mortifications do so little co-operate to their cure, that oftentimes they are their greatest inflamers and incentive, and are like cordials given to cure a cold fit of an ague, they do their work, but bring a hot fit in its place; and besides that, great mortifiers have been soonest assaulted by the spirit of pride, we find that great fasters are naturally angry and choleric. S. Hierom found it in himself, and Rufinus felt some of the effects of it; and therefore this last part of corporal mortification, and the choosing such afflictions by a voluntary imposition, is at no hand to be applied in all cases, but in cases of lust only and intemperance, or natural impatience, or such crimes which dwell in the senses; and then it also would be considered, whether or no rudeness to the body applied for the obtaining patience, be not a direct temptation to impatience, a provoking the spirit, and a running into that, whither we pray that God would suffer us to be led: possibly, such austerities, if applied with great caution and wise circumstances, may be an exercise of patience, when the grace is by other means acquired; and he that finds them so, may use them, if he dares trust himself: but as they are dangerous before the grace is obtained; so when it is, they are not necessary: and still it may be enquired in the case of temptations to lust, whether any such austerities which can consist with health will do the work; so long as the body is in health, it will do its offices of nature; if it is not in health, it cannot do all offices of

\* *Εν πλησμονῇ γὰρ κύψεις; ἐν δὲ ταῖς κακῇς πράξεσιν οὐκ ἐνεργεῖν ἀφραδὲν ἔχουσιν. Antiphon.*

grace, nor many of our calling: and therefore although they may do some advantages to persons tempted with the lowest sins, yet they will not do it all, nor do it alone, nor are they safe to all dispositions; and where they are useful to these smaller and lower purposes, yet we must be careful to observe that the mortification of the spirit, to the greatest and most perfect purposes, is to be set upon by means spiritual and of immediate efficacy; for they are the lowest operations of the soul, which are moved and produced by actions corporal; the soul may from those become lustful or chaste, cheerful or sad, timorous or confident: but yet even in these the soul receives but some dispositions thence, and more forward inclinations; but nothing from the body can be operative in the begetting or increase of charity, or the love of God, or devotion, or in mortifying spiritual and intellectual vices: and therefore those greater perfections, and heights of the soul, such as are designed in this highest degree of mortification, are not apt to be enkindled by corporal austerities; \* and Nigrinus in Lucian finds fault with those philosophers, who thought virtue is to be purchased by cutting the skin with whips, binding the nerves, razing the body with iron: but he taught that virtue is to be placed in the mind by actions internal and immaterial, and that from thence remedies are to be derived against perturbations and actions criminal. And this is determined by the apostle in fairest intimation, *Mortify therefore your earthly members*; and he instances in carnal crimes, *fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness*, which are things may be something abated by corporal mortifications; and that

\* Δὴλον δὲ ἦν ὅτι τῶν τοιούτων κατεργαζὸς φιλοσόφων οἱ ταύτην ἀσκησιν ἀρετῆς ὑπελάμβανον, ἢ πολλαῖς ἀνγκαῖς ἢ πόνοις τὰς νύκτας ἀντίτειν καταγυμνάσωσι; τὺτο μὲν δὲ οἱ πολλοὶ κτελεύοντες, ἄλλοι δὲ μαριγούντες· οἱ δὲ χαριέστεροι, ἢ σιδηρὰ τὰς ἐπιφανείας αὐτῶν καταξύοντες, ἡγεῖτο γὰρ χρῆναι πολὺ πρῶτον ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς τὸ σιγῆν τὸ, ἢ ἀπαθεῖς κατασκευάσαι Lucian. Nigrin.

these are by distinct manner to be helped from other more spiritual vices, he adds, *but now therefore put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, and lying*: To both these sorts of sins, mortification being the general remedy, particular applications are to be made, and it must be only spiritual, or also corporal in proportion to the nature of the sins: <sup>b</sup> he seems to distinguish the remedy by separation of the nature of the crimes, and possibly also by the differing words of [mortify] applied to carnal sins, and [put off] to crimes spiritual.

2. But in the lesser degrees of mortification in order to subduing of all passions of the sensitive appetite, and the consequent and symbolical sins, 'bodily austerities are of good use, if well understood and prudently undertaken: To which purpose I also consider, no acts of corporal austerity or external religion, are of themselves to be esteemed holy or acceptable to God, are no where precisely commanded, no instruments of union with Christ, no immediate parts of divine worship; and therefore to suffer corporal austerities with thoughts determining upon the external action or imaginations of sanctity inherent in the action, is against the purity, the spirituality, and simplicity of the gospel. And this is the meaning of S. Paul, <sup>d</sup> *It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them which walked in them; and, The kingdom of God consists not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and, Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things.* Now if external mortifications are not for themselves, then they are to receive their es-

<sup>a</sup> Col. 3. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Ut corpus redimas, ferrum patieris et ignes,  
Arida nec sitiens ora lavabis aqua.  
Ut valeas animo, quicquam tolerare negabis <sup>c</sup>  
Μενώσας τὰ μέλη ἀπέθεσθε τὰ πάντα.

<sup>c</sup> ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου πλήρης μαριγῶν. Clem. Alex. Pædag. 2.  
14. 17. <sup>d</sup> 1 Tim. 4. 8.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. 13. 9. Rom.



limate as they co-operate to the end; whatsoever is a prudent restraint of an extravagant passion, whatsoever is a direct denial of a sin, whatsoever makes provision for the spirit, or withdraws the fuel from the impure fires of carnality, that is an act of mortification; but those austerities which Baal's priests did use, or the Flagellantes, an ignorant faction that went up and down villages whipping themselves, or those which return periodically on a set day of discipline, and using rudenesses to the body by way of ceremony and solemnity, not directed against the actual incursion of a pungent lust, are not within the verge of the grace of mortification. For unless the temptation to a carnal sin be actually incumbent and pressing upon the soul, pains of infliction and smart do no benefit toward suppressing the habit or inclination; for such sharp disciplines are but short and transient troubles; and although they take away the present fancies of a temptation, yet unless it be rash and uncharitable, there is no effect remanent upon the body, but that the temptation may speedily return. As is the danger, so must be the application of the remedy; actual severities are not imprudently undertaken in case of imminent danger, but to cure an habitual lust, such corporal mortifications are most reasonable, whose effect is permanent, and which takes away whatsoever does minister more fuel, and puts a torch to the pile.

But this is altogether a discourse of Christian prudence, not of precise duty and religion, for if we do by any means provide for our indemnity and secure our innocence, all other exterior mortifications are not necessary, and they are convenient but as they do facilitate or co-operate towards the end. And if that be well understood, it will concern us that they be used with prudence and caution, with purity of intention, and without pride: for since they are nothing in themselves, but are hallowed and adopted into the family of religious actions by participation of the end,

the doing them not for themselves, takes off all complacency and fancy reflecting from an opinion of the external actions; guides and purifies the intention, and teaches us to be prudent in the managing of those austerities, which as they are in themselves afflictive, so have in them nothing that is eligible, if they be imprudent.

And now supposing these premises as our guide to chuse and enter into the action, prudence must be called into the execution and discharge of it, and the manner of its managing; and for the prudential part, I shall first give the advice of Nigrinus in the discipline of the old philosophers; “<sup>a</sup> He that will best institute and instruct men in the studies of virtue and true philosophy, must have regard to the mind, to the body, to the age, to the former education, and capacities or incapacities of the person;” to which all such circumstances may be added as are to be accounted for in all prudent estimations: such as are national customs, dangers of scandal, the presence of other remedies, or disbanding of the inclination.

2. It may also concern the prudence of this duty, not to neglect the smallest inadvertencies and minutes of lust or spiritual inconvenience, but to contradict them in their weakness, and first beginnings. We see that great disturbances are brought from the smallest occasions meeting with an impatient spirit, like great flames kindled from a little spark, fallen into an heap of prepared nitre. “<sup>b</sup> S. Austin tells a story of a certain person much vexed with flies in the region of his dwelling, and himself heightened the trouble by too violent and busy reflection upon the inconsiderableness of the instrument, and the greatness of the vexation alighting upon a peevish spirit. In this disposition he was visited by a manichee (a heretic, that denied God to be the maker of things visible:) he be-

<sup>a</sup> Καὶ τὸν ἄριστα παιδεύειν ἀνθρώπους προαιρούμενον, τὴν μὲν ψυχὴν, τὴν δὲ σῶμα, τὴν δὲ ἡλικίαν τε καὶ τῆς περιέχοντος ἀγωγῆς. Nigr. apud La.

<sup>b</sup> Tract. 1 in Joh.

ing busy to rub his infection upon the next thing he met, asked the impatient person whom he thought to be the maker of flies? He answered, I think the devil was; for they are instruments of great vexation and perpetual trouble: what he rather fancied than believed, or expressed by anger, rather than at all had entertained within, the manichee confirmed by such arguments, to which his adversary was very apt to give consent by reason of his impatience and peevishness. The manichee having set his foot firm upon this first breach proceeded in his question, if the devil made flies, why not bees, who are but a little bigger, and have a sting too? The consideration of the sting made him fit to think, that the little difference in bigness needed not a distinct and a greater efficient, especially since the same workman can make a great as well as a little vessel. The manichee proceeded, If a bee, why not a locust? If a locust then a lizzard, if a lizzard, then a bird, if a bird, then a lamb, and thence he made bold to proceed to a cow, to an elephant, to a man. His adversary by this time being ensnared by granting so much, and now ashamed not to grant more, lest his first concessions should seem unreasonable and impious, confessed the devil to be the maker of all creatures visible." The use which is made of this story, is this caution, that the devil do not abuse us in flies, and provoke our spirits by trifles and impertinent accidents: for if we be unmortified in our smallest motions, it is not imaginable we should stand the blast of an impetuous accident and violent perturbation. Let us not therefore give our passions course in a small accident, because the instance is inconsiderable; for though it be, the consequence may be dangerous, and a wave may follow a wave, till the inundation be general and desperate. And therefore here it is intended for advice, that we be observant of the accidents of our domestic affairs, and curious that every trifling inadvertency of a servant, or slight misbecoming action, or imprudent words be not appre-

hended as instruments of vexation; for so many small occasions, if they be productive of many small disturbances, will produce an habitual churlishness and immortification of spirit.

3. Let our greatest diligence and care be employed in mortifying our predominant passion: for if our care be so great, as not to entertain the smallest, and our resolution so strong and holy, as not to be subdued by the greatest and most passionate desires, the spirit hath done all its work, secures the future, and sanctifies the present, and nothing is wanting but perseverance in the same prudence and religion; and this is typically commanded in the precept of God to Moses and Aaron in the matter of Peor; *Vex the Midianites, because they vexed you, and made you sin by their daughters*; and Phinehas did so; he killed a prince of the house of Simeon, and a princess of Midian; and God confirmed the priesthood to him for ever; meaning that we shall for ever be admitted to a nearer relation to God, if we sacrifice to God our dearest lust: and this is not so properly an act as the end of mortification; therefore it concerns the prudence of the duty that all the efficacy and violence of it be employed against the strongest, and there where is the most dangerous hostility.

4. But if we mean to be masters of the field, and put our victory past dispute, let us mortify our morosity and natural aversations, reducing them to an indifferency, having in our wills no fondnesses, in our spirits no faction of persons or nations: being prepared to love all men, and to endure all things, and to undertake all employments which are duty or counsel in all circumstances and disadvantages. For the excellency of evangelical-sanctity does surmount all antipathies, as a vessel climbs up, and rides upon a wave; *the wolf and the lamb shall cohabit, and a child shall play and put his fingers in the cavern of an asp*: nations whose interest are most contradictory, must be knit by the confederations of a mortified and a

Christian spirit, and single persons must triumph over the difficulties of an indisposed nature, or else their own will is unmortified, and nature is stronger than can well consist with the dominion and absolute empire of grace. To this I reduce such peevish and unhandsome nicenesses, in matters of religion, that are unsatisfied, unless they have all exterior circumstances, trimmed up and made pompous for their religious offices, such who cannot pray without a convenient room, and their devotion is made active only by a well-built chapel, and they cannot sing lauds without church music, and too much light dissolves their intention, and too much dark promotes their melancholy; and because these and the like exterior ministries are good advantages, therefore without them they can do nothing, which certainly is a great intimation and likeness to immortification. Our will should be like the candle of the eye, without all colour in itself, that it may entertain the species of all colours from without: and when we lust after mandrakes and deliciousness of exterior ministries, we many times are brought to betray our own interest, and prostitute our dearest affections to more ignoble and stranger desires. Let us love all natures, and serve all persons, and pray in all places, and fast without opportunities, and do alms above our power, and set ourselves heartily on work to neglect and frustrate those lower temptations of the devil, who will frequently enough make our religion inopportune, if we then will make it infrequent, and will present us with objects enough, and flies to disquiet our persons, if our natures be petulant, peevish, curious and unmortified.

It is a great mercy of God to have an affable, sweet and well disposed nature, and it does half the work of mortification for us; we have the less trouble to subdue our passions and destroy our lusts. But then as those, whose natures are morose, choleric, peevish, and lustful, have greater difficulty, so is their virtue of greater excellence, and returned with a

more ample reward; but it is in all men's natures, as with them who gathered manna, they that gathered little had no luck, and they that gathered much had nothing over; they who are of ill natures shall want<sup>a</sup> no assistance of God's grace to work their cure, though their flesh be longer healing; and they who are sweetly tempered, being naturally meek and modest, chaste, or temperate, will find work enough to contest against their temptations from without, though from within possibly they may have fewer; yet there are greater degrees of virtue and heroical excellencies, and great rewards to which God hath designed them by so fair dispositions, and it will concern all their industry to mortify their spirit, which though it be malleable and more ductile, yet it is as bare and naked of imagery, as the rudest and most iron nature: so that mortification will be every man's duty; no nature, nor piety, nor wisdom, nor perfection, but will need it, either to subdue a lust, or a passion; to cut off an occasion, or to resist a temptation; to persevere, or to go on; to secure our present estate, or to proceed towards perfection. But all men do not think so.

For there are some who have great peace; no fightings within, no troubles without, no disputes or contradictions in their spirit: but these men have the peace of tributaries or a conquered people, the gates of their city stand open day and night, that all the carriages may enter without disputing the pass; the flesh and the spirit dispute not, because the spirit is there in pupillage or in bonds, and the flesh rides in triumph, with the tyranny, and pride and impotency of a female tyrant. For in the sense of religion we all are warriors or slaves; either ourselves are stark dead in trespasses, and sins, or we need to stand perpetually upon our guards in continual observation, and in contestation against our lusts and our pas-

<sup>a</sup> *Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,  
Si modo culturæ patientem commodet aurem.*

*Hor. ep. 1.*

sions ; so long denying and contradicting our own wills, till we will and chuse to do things against our wills, having an eye always to those infinite satisfactions which shall glorify our wills, and all our faculties, when we arrive to that state, in which there shall be no more contradiction, but only that our mortal shall put on immortality.

But as some have a vain and dangerous peace, so others double their trouble by too nice and impertinent scruples, thinking that every temptation is a degree of immortification ; as long as we live we shall have to do with enemies ; but as this life is ever a state of imperfection, so the very design and purpose of mortification is not to take away temptations, but to overcome them : it endeavours to facilitate the work, and secure our condition by removing all occasions it can : but the opportunity of a crime, and the solicitation to a sin is no fault of ours, unless it be of our procuring, or finds entertainment when it comes unsent for. To suffer a temptation is a misery, but if we then set upon the mortification of it, it is an occasion of virtue, and never is criminal, unless we give consent. But then also it would be considered, that it is not good offering ourselves to fire ordeal to confirm our innocence, nor prudent to enter into battle without need, and to shew our valour ; nor safe to procure a temptation, that we may have the reward of mortification of it. For mortification of the spirit is not commanded, as a duty finally resting in itself, or immediately landing upon God's glory, such as are acts of charity and devotion, chastity and justice ; but it is the great instrument of humility and all other graces : and therefore is to be undertaken to destroy a sin, and to secure a virtuous habit ; and besides that to call on a danger is to tempt God, \* and to invite the devil, (and no man is sure of a victory ; it is also great impru-

\* Vide disc. of Temptation.

dence to create a need that we may take it away again; to drink poison to make experiment of the antidote; and at the best it is but a running back to come just to the same place again; for he that is not tempted, does not sin: but he that invites a temptation, that he might overcome it, or provokes a passion, that he may allay it, is then but in the same condition after his pains and his danger: He was not sure he should come so far.

### THE PRAYER.

O DEAREST God, who hast framed man of soul and body, and fitted him with faculties, and proportionable instruments to serve thee according to all our capacities: let thy Holy Spirit rule and sanctify every power and member both of soul and body, that they may keep that beauteous order, which in our creation thou didst intend, and to which thou dost restore thy people in the renovations of grace, that our affections may be guided by reason, our understanding may be enlightened with thy word, and then may guide and persuade our will, that we suffer no violent transportation of passions, nor be overcome by a temptation, nor consent to the impure solicitations of lust; that sin may not reign in our mortal bodies, but that both bodies and souls may be conformable to the sufferings of the holy Jesus, that in our body we may bear the marks and dying of our Lord; and in our spirits we may be humble and mortified, and like him in all his imitable perfections, that we may die to sin and live to righteousness, and after our suffering together with him in this world, we may reign together with him hereafter, to whom in the unity of the most mysterious Trinity be all glory and dominion and praise for ever and ever. Amen.



## SECT. IX.

*Of Jesus being baptized, and going into the Wilderness to be tempted.*

NOW the full time was come, Jesus took leave of his mother and his trade, to begin his Father's work and the office prophetic in order to the redemption of the world; and when John was baptizing in Jordan, Jesus came to John to be baptized of him. The Baptist had never seen his face, because they had been from their infancy driven to several places, designed to several employments, and never met till now. But immediately the Holy Ghost inspired S. John with a discerning and knowing spirit, and at his first arrival he knew him, and did him worship. *And when Jesus desired to be baptized, John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?* For the baptism of John, although it was not a direct instrument of the spirit for the collation of grace, nor that we find administered in any form of words, not so much as in the name of Christ to come (as <sup>a</sup> many dream,) (because even after John had baptized, the Pharisees still doubted, if he were the Messias, which they would not, if in his form of ministration he had published Christ to come after him: and also because it had not been proper for Christ himself to have received that baptism, whose form had specified himself to come hereafter: neither could it consist with the revelation which John had, and the confession which he made, to baptize in the name of Christ to come, whom the spirit marked out to him to be come already, and himself pointed at him with his finger,) yet it was a ceremonious consignation of the doctrine of repentance, <sup>b</sup> which was one great

<sup>a</sup> Gabriel, Sotus, Scotus, &c.

<sup>b</sup> περιέμειν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τῆς χάριτος. *Quest. ad Orthod.* 37. *Acts* 19. 4.

part of the covenant evangelical, and was a divine institution, the susception of it was in order to the fulfilling all righteousness, it was a sign of humility, the persons baptized confessed their sins, it was a sacramental disposing to the baptism and faith of Christ; but therefore John wondered, why the Messiah, the Lamb of God, pure and without spot, who needed not the abstersions of repentance, or the washings of baptism, should demand it, and of him, a sinner and his servant. And in the Hebrew gospel of S. Matthew, which the Nazarens used at Berea, (as <sup>a</sup> S. Hierom reports) these words are added; [the mother of the Lord, and his brethren said unto him: John Baptist baptizeth to the remission of sins, let us go and be baptized of him. He said to them: What have I sinned that I should go and be baptized of him?] and this part of the story is also told by Justin Martyr. But Jesus wanted not a proposition to consign by his baptism proportionable enough to the analogy of its institution; for as others professed their return towards innocence, so he avowed his perseverance in it: and though he was never called in scripture [a sinner] yet he was made sin for us; that is, he did undergo the shame and the punishment; and therefore it was proper enough for him to perform the sacrament of sinners.

But the holy Jesus who came (as himself in answer to the Baptist's question proposed) to fulfil all righteousness, would receive that rite which his Father had instituted in order to the manifestation of his Son: <sup>b</sup> For although the Baptist had a glimpse of him by the first irradiations of the spirit, yet John professed, *That he therefore came baptizing with water, that Jesus might be manifested to Israel*; and it was also a sign given to the Baptist himself, that on whom-

<sup>a</sup> Dial. 3. advers. Pelag.

<sup>b</sup> Ἐβαπτίσθη δὲ ὃς ἐνέχευσεν (ἡτοῖς) ὅτι αὐτὸς ἀπορροήσεως ἡ ἡγεσίας χρίαν ἔχων ἡ καθάρσεως, ὃ τῇ φύσει καθαρὸς ὃς ἦν, ἀλλ' ἵνα καὶ ἡρώδης ἀνῆλθαι ἀπομαρτυρήσῃ ὃς ἐμὴ ὑπερβαλλὴν παράσχῃται. Clem. Constit. Apol. l. 7. c. 23.

soever he saw the spirit descending and remaining, he is the person that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And God chose to actuate the sign at the waters of Jordan in great and religious assemblies convened there at John's baptism, and therefore Jesus came to be baptized, and by this baptism became known to John, who as before he gave to him an indiscriminate testimony, so now he pointed out the person in his sermons and discourses, and by calling him the <sup>a</sup> Lamb of God prophesied of his passion and preached him to be the world's redeemer, and the sacrifice for mankind. He was now manifest to Israel, he confirmed the baptism of John, he sanctified the water to become sacramental and ministerial in the remission of sins, he by a real event declared, that to them who should rightly be baptized the kingdom of heaven should certainly be opened, he inserted himself by that ceremony into the society and participation of holy people, of which communion himself was head and prince; and he did in a symbol purify human nature, whose stains and guilt he had undertaken.

As soon as John had performed his ministry, and Jesus was baptized, he prayed; and the heavens were opened, and the air clarified by a new and glorious light, <sup>b</sup> and the Holy Ghost in the manner of a dove alighted upon his sacred head, and God the Father gave a voice from heaven, saying, *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* This was the inauguration and proclamation of the Messias, when he began to be the great prophet of the new covenant. And this was the greatest meeting that ever was upon earth, where the whole cabinet of the mysterious Trinity was opened, and shewn, as much as the capacities of our present imperfections will permit: the second person in the veil of humanity, the third in the shape or with the motion of a dove, but the first kept

<sup>a</sup> Symbolum supplicii crucis. *Just. Mart.*

φῶς μεγά. *Evang. Ebion.*

<sup>b</sup> ὁ ἰωὴς περιέλαμψεν τὸ πνοῦ

his primitive state, and as to the Israelites he gave notice by way of caution, <sup>a</sup> "Ye saw no shape, but ye heard a voice;" so now also God the Father gave testimony to his holy Son, and appeared only in a voice, without any visible representment.

When the rite and the solemnity was over, Christ ascended up out of the waters, and left so much virtue behind him, that as <sup>b</sup> Gregorius Turonensis reports, that creek of the river, where his holy body had been baptized, was endued with a healing quality, and a power of curing lepers, that bathed themselves in those waters, in the faith and with invocation of the holy name of Jesus. But the manifestation of this power was not till afterwards, for as yet Jesus did no miracles.

As soon as ever the Saviour of the world was baptized, had opened the heavens, which yet never had been opened to man, and was declared the Son of God, Jesus was by the spirit driven into the wilderness, not by an unnatural violence, but by the efficacies of inspiration, and a supernatural inclination and activity of resolution; for it was the Holy Spirit that bore him thither, he was led by the good spirit, to be tempted by the evil, whither also he was pleased to retire to make demonstration that even in an active life, such as he was designed to and intended, some recesses and temporary dismissions of the world are most expedient, for such persons especially whose office is prophetic, and for institution of others; that by such vacancies in prayer and contemplation they may be better enabled to teach others, when they have in such retirements conversed with God.

In the desert, which was four miles from the place of his baptism, and about twenty miles from Jerusalem, as the common computations are, he did abide forty days, and forty nights, where he was perpetually

<sup>a</sup> Ἰσὶ πνεύματι. Matth. 3. 16. Mark 1. 10. ἐν σωματικῇ εἰδού. Luke 3. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Cap. 17. de gloria Martyr.

disturbed and assaulted with evil spirits, in the midst of wild beasts, in a continual fast without eating bread or drinking water; and the angels ministered to him, being messengers of comfort and sustentation sent from his Father for the support and service of his humanity, and employed in resisting and discountenancing the assaults and temporal hostilities of the spirits of darkness.

Whether the devils appeared in any horrid and affrighting shapes, is not certain; but it is more likely, to a person of so great sanctity and high designation they would appear more angelical and immaterial, in representments intellectual, in words and ideas, temptations and enticements, because Jesus was not a person of those low weaknesses to be affrighted or troubled with an ugly phantasm, which can do nothing but abuse the weak and imperfect conceptions of persons nothing extraordinary. And this was the way which Satan or the prince of the devils took, whose temptations were reserved for the last assault, and the great day of trial, for at the expiration of his forty days, Jesus being hungry, the tempter invited him only to eat bread of his own providing, which might refresh his humanity and prove his divinity, hoping that his hunger, and the desire of convincing the devil, might tempt him to eat before the time appointed. But *Jesus answered, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*; meaning that in every word of God, whether the commandment be general or special, a promise is either expressed or implied, of the supply of all provisions necessary for him that is doing the work of God; and that was the present case of Jesus, who was then doing his Father's work, and promoting our interest: and therefore was sure to be provided for: and therefore so are we.

The devil having failed in this assault, tries him again, requiring but a demonstration of his being the Son of God. He sets him upon the <sup>a</sup> battlement of

<sup>a</sup> πρὸς τὸν οὐρανόν, ἀπερὸς τὸν οὐρανόν, καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς γὰρ τὰς ἀντιπαραστάσεων ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ.

the temple, and invites him to throw himself down, upon a pretence that God would send his angels to keep his Son, and quotes scripture for it: but Jesus understood it well; and though he was secured of God's protection, yet he would not tempt God, nor solicit his providence to a dereliction by tempting him to an unnecessary conservation. This assault was silly and weak. But at last he unites all his power of stratagem, and places the holy Jesus upon an exceeding high mountain, and by an angelical power draws into one center species <sup>a</sup> and ideas from all the kingdoms and glories of the world, and makes an admirable map of beauties, and represents it to the eyes of Jesus, saying, that all this was put into his power to give, and he would give it him, if he would fall down and worship him. But then the holy Lamb was angry as a provoked lion, and commanded him away, when his temptations were violent and his demands impudent and blasphemous. *Then the devil leaveth him, and the angels came and ministered unto him*, bringing such things as his necessities required, after he had by a forty days fast done penance for our sins, and consigned to his church the doctrine and discipline of fasting, in order to a contemplative life, and the resisting and overcoming all the temptations and allurements of the devil and all our ghostly enemies.



### Ad. SECT. IX.

*Considerations upon the baptizing, fasting, and temptation of holy Jesus by the Devil.*

WHEN the day did break, and the Baptist was busy in his offices, the sun of righteousness soon en-

<sup>a</sup> φαντάσματα ἐν τῷ αἰρηματισμῷ ἀγαθὰ ἢ καὶ ἀβέραια.

tered upon our hemisphere; and after he had lived a life of darkness and silence for thirty years together, yet now that he came to do the greatest work in the world, and to minister in the most honourable embassy, he would do nothing of singularity, but fulfil all righteousness and satisfy all commands, and join in the common rites and sacraments, which all people innocent or penitent did undergo, either as deletories of sin or instruments of grace. For so he would needs be baptized by his servant; and though he was of purity sufficient to do it, and did actually by his baptism purify the purifier, and sanctify that, and all other streams to a holy ministry and effect, yet he went in, bowing his head like a sinner, unclothing himself like an imperfect person, and craving to be washed, as if he had been crusted with an impure leprosy: thereby teaching us to submit ourselves to all those rites which he would institute; and although some of them, be like the baptism of John joined with confession of sins, and publication of our infirmities, yet it were better for us to lay by our loads, and wash our ulcers, than by concealing them, out of vainer desires of impertinent reputation, cover our disease till we are heart-sick and die. But when so holy a person does all the pious ministries of the more imperfect, it is a demonstration to us, that a life common and ordinary, without affectation or singularity, is the most prudent and safe. Every great change, every violence of fortune, all eminencies and unevennesses whatsoever, whether of person or accident, or circumstance, puts us to a new trouble, requires a distinct care, creates new dangers, objects more temptations, marks us out the object of envy, makes our standing more insecure, and our fall more contemptible and ridiculous. But an even life spent with as much rigour of duty to God as ought to be, yet in the same manner of devotions, in the susception of ordinary offices, in bearing public burdens, frequenting public assemblies, performing offices of civility,

receiving all the rights of an established religion, complying with national customs, and hereditary solemnities of a people, in nothing disquieting public peace, or disrelishing the great instruments of an innocent communion, or dissolving the circumstantial ligaments of charity, or breaking laws, and the great relations and necessities of the world, out of fancy or singularity, is the best way to live holily, and safely, and happily: safer from sin and envy, and more removed from trouble and temptation.

When Jesus came to John to be baptised, John out of humility and modesty refused him, but when Jesus by reduplication of his desire, fortifying it with a command, made it in the Baptist to become a duty, then he obeyed. And so also did the primitive clerks refuse to do offices of great dignity, and highest ministry, looking through the honour upon the danger, and passing by the dignity they consider the charge of the cure, and knew that the eminency of the office was in all senses insecure to the person, till by command and peremptory injunction of their superiors it was put past a dispute, and became necessary, and that either they must perish instantly in the ruins and precipices of disobedience, or put it to the hazard, and a fair venture for a brighter crown, or a bigger damnation. I wish also this care were entailed, and did descend upon all ages of the church; for the ambitious seeking of dignities and prelacies ecclesiastical is grown the pest of the church, and corrupts the salt itself, and extinguishes the lights, and gives too apparent evidences to the world, that neither the end is pure, nor the intention sanctified, nor the person innocent, but the purpose ambitious or covetous, and the person vicious, and the very entrance into church offices is with an impure torch, and a foul hand, or a heart empty of the affections of religion, or thoughts of doing God's work. I do not think the present age is to be treated with, concerning denying to accept rich prelacies and pompous dignities, but it were but reasonable that the main in-



tention, and intellectual design should be to appreciate, and esteem the office and employment to be of greatest consideration. It is lawful to desire a bishopric; neither can the unwillingness to accept it be, in a prudent account, adjudged the aptest disposition to receive it, (especially if done in <sup>a</sup> ceremony, just in the instant of their entertainment of it, and possibly after a long ambition) but yet it were well if we remember, that such desires must be sanctified with holy care and diligence in the office; for the honey is guarded with thousands of little sharp stings and dangers, and it will be a sad account, if we be called to audit for the crimes of our diocese, after our own talleys are made even; and he that believes his own load to be big enough, and trembles at the apprehension of the horrors of doomsday, is not very wise, if he takes up those burthens which he sees have crushed their bearers, and presses his own shoulders till the bones crack, only because the bundles are wrapt in white linen and bound with silken cords. *He that desires the office of a Bishop, desires a good work*, saith St. Paul, and therefore we must not look on it for the fair spreading sails, and the beauteous streamers, which the favour of princes hath put to it, to make it sail fairer, and more secure against the dangers of secular discomforts; but upon the burthen it bears; prelacy is a good work, and a good work well done is very honourable, and shall be rewarded, but he that considers the infinite dangers of miscarrying, and that the loss of the ship will be imputed to the pilot, may think it many times the safest course to put God or his superiors to the charge of a command, before he undertakes such great ministeries; and he that enters in by the force of authority, as he himself receives a testimony of his worth and aptness to the employment, so he gives the world another, that his search for it was not criminal, nor his person immodest, and by

his weighty apprehension of his dangers he will consider his work and obtain a grace to do it diligently, and to be accepted graciously. And this was the modesty and prudence of the Baptist.

*When Jesus was baptized he prayed, and the heavens were opened.* External rites of divine institution received benediction and energy from above, but it is by the mediation of prayer; <sup>a</sup> for there is nothing ritual, but it is also joined with something moral, and required on our part in all persons capable of the use of reason, that we may understand that the blessings of religion are works and graces too; God therefore requiring us to do something, not that we may glory in it, but that we may estimate the grace, and go to God for it in the means of his own hallowing; Naaman had been stupid, if when the prophet bade him wash seven times in Jordan for his cure, he had not confessed the cure to be wrought by the God of Israel, and the ministry of his prophet, but had made himself the author because of his obedience to the enjoined condition; and it is but a weak fancy to derogate from God's grace, and the glory and the freedom of it, because he bids us wash before we are cleansed, and pray when we are washed, and commands us to ask before we shall receive. But this also is true from this instance, that the external rite of sacrament is so instrumental, in a spiritual grace, that it never does it, but with the conjunction of something moral; <sup>b</sup> and this truth is of so great persuasion in the Greek church, that the mystery of consecration in the venerable eucharist is amongst them attributed not to any mystical words, and secret operations of syllables, but to the efficiency of the prayers of the church, in the just imitation of the whole action, and the rite of institution. And the purpose of it is that

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2, 3. Gal. 3. 14, 27. 1 Pet. 3. 21. 1 Cor. 12. 7, 13. Matt. 3. 2, 6.

<sup>b</sup> Justin Mart. apol. 2. Euseb. Emiss. serm. 5. de pasch. S. August. 1. 3 c. 4. de Trin.

we might secure the excellence and holiness of such predispositions and concomitant graces, which are necessary to the worthy and effectual susception of the external rites of christianity.

After the holy Jesus was baptized and had prayed, <sup>a</sup> *the heavens opened, the Holy Ghost descended,* and a voice from heaven proclaimed him to be the Son of God, and one in whom the Father was well pleased; and the same ointment, that was cast upon the head of our high Priest, went unto his beard, and thence fell to the borders of his garment; for as Christ our head felt these effects in manifestation, so the church believes God does to her, and to her meanest children in the susception of the holy rite of Baptism in right, apt, and holy dispositions. For the heavens open too upon us, and the Holy Ghost descends to sanctify the waters, and to hallow the catechumen, and to pardon the past and repented sins, and to consign him to the inheritance of sons, and to put on his military girdle, and give him the sacrament and oath of fidelity; for all this is understood to be meant by those frequent expositions of scripture, calling baptism <sup>b</sup> *the laver of regeneration, illumination, a washing away the filth of the flesh, and the answer of a good conscience, a being buried with Christ,* and many others of the like purpose and signification. But we may also learn hence sacredly to esteem the rites of religion, which he first sanctified by his own personal susception, and then made necessary by his own institution and command, and God hath made to be conveyances of blessing and ministeries of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus in the manner or visible representment of a dove, either in similitude of figure which he was pleased to assume; as the church more generally hath believed; or at least

<sup>a</sup> Quod Christus vidit cœlas apertos, nestri utiq. gratiâ factum est quibus, per lavatrum undę regeneratricis januapanditur regni cœlestis. *Beda in Mat. l. 1. c. 1.*

<sup>b</sup> Ephes. 5. 26. Heb. 10. 32. 1 Pet. 3. 21. Rom. 6. 4.

he did descend like a dove, and in his robe of fire hovered over the Baptist's head, and then sate upon him, as the dove uses to sit upon the house of her dwelling; whose proprieties of nature are pretty and modest hieroglyphics of the duty of spiritual persons, which are thus observed in both philosophies; the dove sings not but mourns, it hath no gall, <sup>a</sup> it strikes not with its bill, hath no crooked talons, and forgets its young ones soonest of any of the inhabitants of the air; and the effects of the Holy Spirit are symbolical in all the sons of sanctification. For the voice of the church is sad in those accents which express her own condition; but as the dove is not so sad in her breast as in her note, so neither is the interior condition of the church wretched and miserable, but indeed her song is most of it elegy within her own walls, and her condition looks sad, and her joys are not pleasures in the public estimate, but they that afflict her think her miserable, because they know not the sweetnesses of a holy peace and serenity, which supports her spirit and plains the heart under a rugged brow, making the soul festival under the noise of a threne and sadder groanings. But the sons of consolation are also taught their duty by this apparition: for upon whomsoever the Spirit descends, he teaches him to be meek and charitable, neither offending by the violence of hands, or looser language. For the dove is inoffensive in beak and foot, and feels no disturbance and violence of passions when its dearest interests are destroyed, that we also may be of an even spirit in the saddest accidents, which usually discompose our peace; and however such symbolical intimations receive their efficacy from the fancy of the contriver, yet here, whether this apparition did intend any such moral representment, or no, it is certain that wherever the holy Spirit does dwell there also peace and sanctity, meekness and charity, a mortified will,

<sup>a</sup> Sil. in hepatic. habet autem in intestino.

and an active dereliction of our desires do inhabit. But besides this hieroglyphical representment, this dove, like that which Noah sent out from the ark, did aptly signify the world to be renewed, and all to be turned to a new creation, and God hath made a new covenant with us, that unless we provoke him he will never destroy us any more.

No sooner had the voice of God pronounced Jesus to be the well-beloved Son of God, but the Devil thought it of great concernment to attempt him with all his malice and his art; and that is the condition of all those whom God's grace hath separated from the common expectations and societies of the world; and therefore the son of Sirach gave good advice, \* *My son if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation*; for not only the spirits of darkness are exasperated at the declension of their own kingdom, but also the nature and constitution of virtues and eminent graces, which holy persons exercise in their lives, is such as to be easily assailable by their contraries, apt to be lessened by time, to be interrupted by weariness, to grow flat and insipid by tediousness of labour, to be omitted and grow infrequent by the impertinent diversions of society and secular occasions; so that to rescind the ligaments of vice, made firm by nature and evil habits, to acquire every new degree of virtue, to continue the holy fires of zeal in their just proportion, to overcome the Devil, and to reject the invitations of the world, and the softer embraces of the flesh, which are the proper employment of the sons of God, is a perpetual difficulty, and every possibility of prevaricating the strictnesses of a duty is a temptation, and an insecurity to them who have begun to serve God in hard battles.

The Holy Spirit did drive Jesus into the wilderness to be temptèd by the Devil; and though we are bound to pray instantly that we fall into no temptation, yet

\* Ecclus. 9. 1.

if by divine permission, or by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit we be engaged in an action or course of life that is full of temptation, and empty of comfort, let us apprehend it as an issue of Divine Providence, as an occasion of the rewards of diligence and patience, as an instrument of virtue, as a designation of that way in which we must glorify God, but no argument of disfavour, since our dearest Lord, the most holy Jesus, who could have driven the Devil away by the breath of his mouth, yet was by the spirit of his father, permitted to a trial and molestation by the spirits of darkness. And this is St. James's counsel, *"My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience."* So far is a blessing, when the spirit is the instrument of our motion, and brings us to the trial of our faith: but if the spirit leaves us and delivers us over to the Devil, not to be tempted, but to be abused and ruined, it is a sad condition, and the greatest instance of their infelicity, whom the church upon sufficient reason and with competent authority delivers over to Satan, by the infliction of the greater excommunication.

As soon as it was permitted to the Devil to tempt our Lord, he, like fire, had no power to suspend his act, but was as entirely determined by the fulness of his malice, as a natural agent by the appetites of nature, that we may know, to whom we owe the happiness of all those hours and days of peace, in which we sit under the trees of Paradise, and see no serpent encircling the branches, and presenting us with fair fruit to ruin us. It is the mercy of God, we have the quietness of a minute, for if the Devil's chain were taken off he would make our very beds a torment, our tables to be a snare, our sleeps phantastic, lustful, and illusive, and every sense should have an object of delight and danger, an hyæna to kiss and to perish

in its embraces. But the holy Jesus having been assaulted by the Devil, and felt his malice by the experiments of humanity, is become so merciful a high priest and so sensible of our sufferings and danger, by the apprehensions of compassion, that he hath put a hook into the nostrils of leviathan, and although the reliques of seven nations be in our borders and fringes of our country, yet we live as safe as did the Israelites, upon whom sometimes an inroad and invasion was made, and sometimes they had rest forty years, and when the storm came, some remedy was found out, by his grace, by whose permission the tempest was stirred up; and we find many persons, who in seven years meet not with a violent temptation to a crime; but their battles are against impediments and retardations of improvement: their own rights are not directly questioned, but the Devil and sin are wholly upon the defensive. Our duty here is an act of affection to God, making returns of thanks for the protection, and of duty to secure and continue the favour.

But the design of the Holy Ghost being to expose Jesus to the temptation, he arms himself with fasting and prayer, and baptism, and the Holy Spirit against the day of battle, he continues in the wilderness forty days and forty nights without meat or drink, attending to the immediate addresses and colloquies with God, not suffering the interruption of meals, but representing his own, and the necessities of all mankind with affections and instances of spirit, love and wisdom, as might express the excellency of his person and promote the work of our redemption, his conversation being in this interval but a resemblance of angelical perfection; and his fasts not an instrument of mortification, for he needed none, <sup>a</sup> he had contracted no stain from his own nor his parents acts; neither

<sup>a</sup> Εἰδ' ἔταν τῆς χάρις καλῶς τότε σοι πρὸς ἀνικειμένας δυνάμεις παλαίειν δίδωσι τὴν ἰξυσίαν ὥσπερ γὰρ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα, καὶ τισσαράκοντα ἡμέρας ἐκίχητο, ἔχ' ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τούτου νικᾷν ἐκ ἐδύνατο, ἀλλ' ὅτι πάντα τάξει καὶ ἀκολούθια πράττειν ἐβουλό. ὡς καὶ σὺ πρὸς τὰ βαπτισμαῖς τοῖς ἀνικειμένοις παλαίειν μὴ τολμήσας λαβὼν δὲ τὴν χάριν καὶ λοιπὴν Σαρῶν τοῖς τῆς δικαιοσύνης ὑπλοῖς, ἀγαγὲς τότε, καὶ εἰ θάλει; ἐκγρηγίζε, Cyril. Hieros. Catech. 3.

do we find that he was at all hungry, or afflicted with his abstinence, till after the expiration of forty days. *He was afterwards an hungry* (said the Evangelist) and his abstinence from meat might be a defecation of his faculties, and an opportunity of prayer, but we are not sure it intended any thing else: but it may concern the prudence of religion to snatch at this occasion of duty, so far as the instance is imitable; and in all violences of temptation to fast and pray, prayer being a rare antidote against the poison, and fasting a convenient disposition to intense, actual, and undisturbed prayer. \* And we may remember also that we have been baptized and consigned with the spirit of God, and have received the adoption of sons, and the graces of sanctification in our baptisms, and had then the seed of God put into us, and then we put on Christ, and entering into battle put on the whole armour of righteousness; and therefore we may by observing our strength, gather also our duty and greatest obligation, to fight manfully, that we may triumph gloriously.

The Devil's first temptation of Christ was upon the instances and first necessities of nature, Christ was hungry and the Devil invited him to break his fast upon the expence of a miracle, by turning the stones into bread. But the answer Jesus made was such as taught us, since the ordinary providence of God is sufficient for our provision or support, extraordinary ways of satisfying necessities are not to be undertaken, but God must be relied upon, his time attended, his manner entertained, and his measure thankfully received. Jesus refused to be relieved, and denied to manifest the divinity of his person rather than he would do an act, which had in it the intimation of

\* Εάν σοι προσβάλῃ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα ὁ τῷ φαίῳ διώκῃς ἢ πειραστῇ. προσβαλὼν δὲ (ὃ γὰρ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ ἦ θεῷ) μὴ προσέβαλε διὰ τὸ κάλυμμα, τῷ κρυπλῷ φωτὶ διὰ τὸ φαινόμενον ἔχεις ὡς νικῆσεις. μὴ φοβῆσθῃς τὸν ἀγῶνα. προσβάλῃ τὸ ὕδωρ, προσβάλῃ τὸ πνεῦμα, ἐν ᾧ πάντῃ τὰ μέλη τῷ πονηρῷ τὰ πεπυρωμένα σῶσθ' ὅσιστα πνεῦμα μὲν ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ διαλύειν ὀρθ' ἔδοξεν γὰρ εἶναι, ἀλλὰ πῦρ ἐβίβησιν. Nazian. Orat. in S. Bapt.



a diffident spirit, or might be expounded a disreputation to God's providence. And therefore it is an improvident care, and impious security to take evil courses, and use vile instruments to furnish our table and provide for our necessities. God will certainly give us bread, and till he does we can live by the breath of his mouth, by the word of God, by the light of his countenance, by the refreshment of his promises; for if God gives not provisions into our granaries, he can feed us out of his own, that is, out of the repositories of charity. If the flesh pots be removed he can also alter the appetite, and when our stock is spent, he can also lessen the necessity; or if that continues he can drown the sense of it, in a deluge of patience and resignation. Every word of God's mouth can create a grace, and every grace can supply two necessities, both of the body and the spirit, by the comforts of this, to support that, that they may bear each others burden and alleviate the pressure.

But the Devil is always prompting us to change our stones into bread, our sadnesses into sensual comfort, our drynesses into inundations of fancy and exterior sweetnesss: for he knows that the ascetic tables of mortification, and the stones of the desert are more healthful, then the fulnesses of voluptuousness, and the corn of the valleys. He cannot endure we should live a life of austerity or self-denial; if he can get us but to satisfy our senses, and a little more freely to please our natural desires, he then hath a fair field for the battle; but so long as we force him to fight in hedges and morasses, encircling and crouding up his strengths into disadvantages by our stone walls, our hardnesses of discipline and rudenesses of mortification, we can with more facilities repel his flatteries and receive fewer incommodities of spirit: but thus the Devil will abuse us by the impotency of our natural desires, and therefore let us go to God for satisfaction of our wishes; God can, and does, when it

is good for us, change our stones into bread: for he is a father so merciful, that *if we ask him a fish, he will not give us a scorpion; if we ask him bread, he will not offer us a stone*: but will satisfy all our desires by ministrations of the spirit, making stones to become our meat, and tears our drink; which although they are unpleasant, and harsh to natural appetites, yet by the operation and influences of God's holy spirit, they are made instruments of health, and life, and salvation.

- The Devil, perceiving Jesus to be a person of greater eminency and perfection than to be moved by sensual and low desires, makes a second assault by a temptation something more spiritual, and tempts him to presumption and indiscreet confidence, to a throwing himself down from the pinnacles of the Temple, upon the stock of predestination, that God might secure him by the ministry of angels, and so prove his being the Son of God. And indeed it is usual with the Devil, when severe persons have so much mortified their lower appetites, that they are not easily overcome by an invitation of carnality or intemperance, to stir them to opinions of their own sanctity, and make their first escaping prove their second and greater dangers. But that the Devil should persuade Jesus to throw himself down because he was the Son of God, was an invitation to no purpose, save only that it gave occasion to this truth, that God's providence secures all his sons in the ways of Nature, and while they are doing their duty; but loves not to be tempted to acts unreasonable and unnecessary: God will protect his servants in or from all evils happening without their knowledge, or against their will; but not from evils of their own procuring. Heron, an inhabitant of the desert, suffered the same temptation and was overcome by it, for he died with his fall, sinfully and ingloriously. For the caresses of God's love to his saints and servants are security against all but themselves. The Devil and all the

world offer to do them mischief, but then they shall be safe; because they are innocent; if they once offer to do the same to themselves, they lose their protection, because they lost their prudence and their charity. But here also it will concern all those, who by their eminent employment and greater ministeries in ecclesiasticals are set upon the pinnacle of the Temple, to take care that the Devil tempt not them to a precipice; a fall from so great a height will break the bones in pieces: and yet there also the station is least firm, the posture most uneasy, the prospect vertiginous, and the Devil busy and desirous to thrust us headlong.

St. Hierom here observes well, the Devil intending mischief to our blessed Saviour invited him to cast himself down.\* He may persuade us to a fall, but cannot precipitate us without our own act. And it is an infinite mercy in God, that the Devil, who is of malice infinite, is of so restrained and limited a power that he can do us no ghostly disadvantage, but by persuading us to do it ourselves. And then it will be a strange imprudence to lay violent and unreasonable hands upon ourselves, and do that mischief which our strongest and most malicious adversary cannot, or to be invited by the only rhetoric of a dog's barking to come near him, to untie his chain, to unloose his muzzle for no other end but that we may be bitten. Just such a fool is every person that consents to the temptations of the Devil.

By this time the Devil began to perceive that this was the Son of God, and designed to be the king of all the world, and therefore resolved for the last assault to proffer him the kingdoms of the world; thinking ambition more likely to ruin him, because he knew it was that which prevailed upon himself, and all those fallen stars, the angels of darkness. That the Devil told a lie it is most likely, when he said he had power

\* S. Hierom. in 4. cap. Mat.

to dispose the kingdoms of the world; for originally and by proper inherent right God alone disposes all governments; but it is also certain, that the Devil is a person capable of a delegate employment in some great mutation of states, and many probabilities have been observed by wise personages, persuading that the grandeur of the Roman empire was in the degrees of increment and decrement permitted to the power and managing of the Devil, that the greatness of that government being in all appearance full of advantage to Satan's kingdom, and employed for the dis-improvement of the weak beginnings and improbable increase of christianity, might give lustre and demonstration to it that it came from God, since the great permissions of power made to the Devil, and acted with all art and malice in defiance of the religion, could produce no other effect upon it, but that it made it grow greater; and the greatness was made more miraculous, since the Devil, when his chain was off, fain would, but could not suppress it.

The Lamb of God, that heard him with patience tempt him to do himself a mischief, and to throw himself headlong, could by no means endure it, when he tempted to a direct dishonouring of God: our own injuries are opportunities of patience; but when the glory of God and his immediate honour is the question, then is the occasion and precise minute for the flames of a clear, shining and unconsuming zeal. But the care of God's glory had so filled and employed all the faculties of Jesus, that it takes no notice of the offer; and it were well also that we had fewer opinions of the lustre of worldly dignities, or at least that we, in imitation of our blessed master, should refuse to accept all the world, when it is to be bought of the Devil at the expence of a deadly sin. For that government cannot be very honourable that makes us slaves to the worst of tyrants; and all those princes and great personages who by injury and usurpation possess and invade others rights, would do well to

consider, that a kingdom is too dearly paid for, if the condition be first to worship the Devil.

When the Devil could do no good, he departed for a time. If he could ever have spied a time of returning he wanted nor will nor malice to observe and use it; and although Jesus was a person without danger, yet I doubt not but the Holy Ghost described that circumstance, that we should not have the securities of a deep peace, when we have had the success of conquerors; for a surprize is most full of horror and of more certain ruin; so that we have no security, but a perpetual observation; that, together with the grace of God, (who takes care of all his servants, and will drive away the tempter, when he pleases, and help us always when we need) is as great argument for our confidence and encouragement to our prayers and address to God, as it is safety to our person, and honour to our victory. And let us account it our honour, that the trials of temptation, which is the greatest sadness of our condition, are hallowed by the temptation of Jesus, and our condition assured by his assistances, and the assistances procured by our prayers, most easily upon the advantage of his sufferings and compassion. And we may observe that poverty, predestination, and ambition are the three quivers from which the Devil drew his arrows which (as the most likely to prevail) he shot against Christ; but now he shot in vain; and gave probation that he might be overcome; our captain hath conquered for himself and us. By these instances we see our danger, and how we are provided of a remedy.

### THE PRAYER.

O HOLY Jesus, who didst fulfil all righteousness, and didst live a life of evenness, and obedience, and community, submitting thyself to all rites and sanctions of divine ordinance, give me grace to live in the fellowship of thy holy church, a life of piety, and without

singularity, receiving the sweet influence of thy sacraments and rites, and living in the purities and innocencies of my first sanctification. I adore thy goodness infinite, that thou hast been pleased to wash my soul in the laver of regeneration, that thou hast consigned me to the participation of thy favours by the holy eucharist; let me not return to the infirmities of the old man, whom thou hast crucified on thy cross, and who was buried with thee in baptism, nor renew the crimes of my sinful years, which were so many recessions from baptismal purities, but let me ever receive the emissions of thy divine spirit, and be a son of God, a partner of thine immortal inheritance; and when thou seest it needful, I may receive testimony from heaven, that I am thy servant, and thy child; and grant that I may so walk, that I neither disrepute the honour of the Christian institution, nor stain the whitenesses of that innocence, which thou didst invest my soul withal, when I put on the baptismal robe, nor break my holy vow, nor lose my right of inheritance, which thou hast given me by promise and grace, but that thou mayest love me, with the love of a father, and a brother, and a husband, and a Lord, and I serve thee in the communion of saints, in the susception of sacraments, in the actions of a holy life, and in a never-failing love, or interrupted devotion; to the glory of thy name, and the promotion of all those ends of religion, which thou hast designed in the excellent economy of Christianity. Grant this, holy Jesus, for thy mercies sake, and for the honour of thy name, which is and shall be adored for ever and ever. Amen.

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## DISCOURSE V.

### *Of Temptation.*

GOD, who is the fountain of good, did choose rather to bring good out of evil, than not to suffer any

evil to be; not only because variety of accidents and natures do better entertain our affections, and move our spirits, who are transported and suffer great impressions by a circumstance, by the very opposition and accidental lustre and eminency of contraries, but also that the glory of the divine providence in turning the nature of things into the designs of God might be illustrious, and that we may in a mixed condition have more observation, and after our danger and our labour may obtain a greater reward; for temptation is the opportunity of virtue and a crown; God having disposed us in such a condition, that our virtues must be difficult, our inclinations averse and corrigible, our avocations many, our hostilities bitter, our dangers proportionable, that our labour might be great, our inclinations suppressed and corrected, our intentions be made actual, \* our enemies be resisted, and our dangers pass into security and honour, after a contestation, and a victory, and a perseverance. It is every man's case; trouble is as certainly the lot of our nature and inheritance, and we are so sure to be tempted, that in the deepest peace and silence of spirit oftentimes is our greatest danger; not to be tempted is sometimes our most subtle temptation. It is certain then, we cannot be secure, when our security is our enemy; but therefore we must do as God himself does, make the best of it, and not be sad at that, which is the public portion and the case of all men, but order it according to the intention, place it in the eye of virtue, that all its actions and motions may tend thither, there to be changed into felicities. But certain it is, unless we first be cut and hewn in the mountains, we shall not be fixed in the temple of God; but by incision and contusions our roughnesses may become plain, or our sparks kindled, and we may be either for the temple, or the altar, spiritual building, or holy fire, something that God shall delight in, and then the temptation was not amiss.

\* Erras mi frater, erras, si putas unquam Christianum persecutionem non pati, Tunc maxime oppugaris, si te oppugari nescis. *S. Hier. ad Heliol.*

And therefore we must not wonder, that oftentimes it so happens, that nothing will remove a temptation, no diligence, no advices, no labour, no prayers; not because these are ineffectual, but because it is most fit the temptation should abide, for ends of God's designing; and although S. Paul was a person, whose prayers were likely to be prevalent, and his industry of much prudence and efficacy toward the drawing out of his thorn, yet God would not do it, but continued his war, only promising to send his succour, *My grace is sufficient for thee*; meaning he should have an enemy to try his spirit and improve it, and he should also have God's grace to comfort and support it; but as without God's grace the enemy would spoil him, so without an enemy God's grace would never swell up into glory and crown him. For the caresses of a pleasant fortune are apt to swell into extravagancies of spirit, and burst into the dissolution of manners; and unmixed joy is dangerous: but if in our fairest flowers we spy a locust, or feel the uneasiness of a sackcloth under our fine linen, or our purple be tied with an uneven and a rude cord; any little trouble, but to correct our wildnesses, though it be but a death's head served up at our feasts, it will make our tables fuller of health, and freer from snare, it will allay our spirits, making them to retire from the weakness of dispersion, to the union and strength of a sober recollection.

Since therefore it is no part of our employment or our care to be free from all the attempts of an enemy, but to be safe in despite of his hostility, it now will concern us to inform ourselves of the state of the war in general, and then to make provisions and to put on armour accordingly.

1. S. <sup>b</sup> Cyprian often observes, and makes much of the discourse, that the Devil when he intends a battery, first views the strengths and situation of the

<sup>a</sup> 2 Cor. 12. g.

<sup>b</sup> Serm. de zelo.



place; his sense drawn out of the cloud of an allegory is this; the Devil first considers the constitution and temper of the person he is to attempt, and where he observes his natural inclination apt for a vice, he presents him with objects, and opportunity, and arguments fitting to his caitive disposition; from which he is likely to receive the smaller opposition, since there is a party within, that desires his intromission. Thus to lustful natures he represents the softer whispers of the spirit of fornication: to the angry and revengeful he offers to consideration the satisfactions and content of a full revenge, and the emissions of anger: to the envious he makes panegyricks of our rivals, and swells our fancies to opinion, our opinion to self-love, self-love to arrogance, and these are supported by contempt of others, and all determine upon envy, and expire in malice. Now in these cases, when our natures are caitive and unhandsome, it were good we were conscious of our own weaknesses, and by special arts and strengths of mortification fortify that part, where we are apt and exposed to danger; we are sure enough to meet a storm there, and we also are likely to perish in it, unless we correct those aversenesses and natural indispositions, and reduce them to the evennesses of virtue, or the affections and moderation of a good nature: Let us be sure that the Devil take not a helve from our own branches to fit his axe, that so he may cut the tree down; and certainly he that does violence to his nature, will not be easy to the entertainment of affections preternatural and violent.

2. But the Devil also observes all our exterior accidents, occasions and opportunities of action; he sees what company we keep, he observes what degrees of love we have to our wives, what looseness of affection towards children, how prevalent their persuasions, how inconvenient their discourses, how trifling their interests, and to what degrees of determination they move us by their importunity or their

power. The Devil tempted Adam by his wife, because he saw his affections too pliant, and encircling her with the entertainment of fondness, joy, wonder, and amorous fancy; it was her hand that made the fruit beauteous to Adam; she saw it fair of itself, and so she eat; but Adam was not moved by that argument, but the *woman gave it me, and I did eat*: she gave vivacity to the temptation, and efficacy to the argument. And the severity of the man's understanding would have given a reasonable answer to the insinuations of the serpent; that was an ugly beast, and his arguments not being of themselves convincing to a wise person, either must put on advantages of a fair insinuation and representment, or they are returned with scorn; but when the beauteous hands of his young virgin mistress became the orators, \* the temptation was an *amorevolezza*, he kisses the presenter and hugs the ruin. Here therefore it is our safest course to make a retrenchment of all those excrescencies of affections, which like wild and irregular succours, draw away nourishment from the trunk, making it as sterile as itself is unprofitable; as we must restrain the inclinations of nature, so also of society and relation, when they become inconvenient, and let nothing of our family be so adopted or naturalized into our affections, as to create within us a new concupiscence, and a second time spoil our nature; what God intended to us for a help, let not our fondnesses convert into a snare, and he, that is not ready to deny the importunities, and to reject the interests of a wife, or child, or friend, when the question is for God, deserves to miss the comforts of a good, and to feel the troubles of an imperious woman.

3. We also have ends and designs of our own; some great purpose, upon which the greatest part of our

\* Habet n. voluptatem quandam aumonitio uxoria, quum plurimum ametur quod consulit. S. Chrysost.

life turns ; it may be, we are to raise a family, to recover a sunk estate, or else ambition, honour, or a great employment is the great hinge of all our greater actions. And some men are apt to make haste to be rich, or are to pass through a great many difficulties to be honourable ; and here the Devil will swell the hopes, and obstruct the passages ; he will heighten the desire, and multiply the business of access, making the concupiscence more impatient, and yet the way to the purchase of our purposes so full of employment and variety, that both the implacable desire and the multitude of changes and transactions may increase the danger, and multiply the sin. When the enemy hath observed our ends, he makes his tentations to reflect from that angle which is direct upon them, provoking to malice and impatience against whomsoever we find standing in our way, whether willingly or by accident ; then follow naturally all those sins, which are instrumental to removing the impediments, to facilitating the passage, to endearing our friends, to procuring more confidents, to securing our hopes, and entering upon possession. Simon Magus had a desire to be accounted some great one, and by that purpose he was tempted to sorcery and divination, and with a new object he brought a new sin into the world, adding simony to his sorcery, and taught posterity that crime, which till then had neither name nor being. And those ecclesiastics, who violently affect rich or pompous prelacies, pollute themselves with worldly arts, growing covetous as Syrian merchants, ambitious as the Levantine princes, factious as the people, revengeful as jealousy, and proud as conquerors and usurpers, and by this means beasts are brought into the temple, and the temple itself is exposed to sale, and the holy rites as well as the beasts of sacrifice are made venal ; to prevent the infinite inconveniencies, that thrust themselves into the common and great roads of our life, the best course is to cut our great channel into little rivulets,

making our ends the more, that we may be indifferent to any, proposing nothing great, that our desires may be little, for so we shall be better able to digest the troubles of an enemy, the contradictions of an unhandsome accident, the crossing of our hopes; because our desires are even, and our ends are less considerable, and we can with much readiness divert upon another purpose, having another ready with the same proportion to our hopes and desires as the first. Thus if we propound to ourselves an honest employment, or a quiet retirement, a work of charity abroad, or of devotion at home, if we miss in our first setting forth, we return to shore, where we can negotiate with content, it being alike to us, either to traffick abroad with more gain, or trade at home with more safety; but when we once grow great in our desires, fixing too earnestly upon one object, we either grow impatient, as Rachael, (Give me children, or I die,) or take ill courses and use unlawful means, (as Tamar, chusing rather to lie with her father, than to die without issue) or else are miserable in the loss and frustration of our hopes (like the women of Ramah, who would not be comforted :) Let therefore our life be moderate, our desires reasonable, our hopes little, our ends none in eminency and prelation above others; for as the rays of light passing through the thin air, end in a small and undiscerned pyramis; but reflected upon a wall, are doubled and increase the warmth to a scorching and troublesome heat: \*so the desires of man, if they pass through an even, and an indifferent life towards the issues of an ordinary and necessary course, they are little, and within command; but if they pass upon an end or aim of difficulty or ambition, they duplicate and grow to a disturbance; and we have seen the even and temperate lives of indifferent persons continue in many degrees of innocence;

\* *Vim temperatam Dii quoque; proceunt  
In majus: iidem odere vires  
Omne nefas animo moventes.*

but the temptations of busy designs is too great even for the best of dispositions.

But these temptations are crasse and material, and soon discernible; it will require some greater observation to arm against such as are more spiritual and immaterial. For he hath apples to cozen children, and gold for men, the kingdoms of the world for the ambition of princes, and the vanities of the world for the intemperate, he hath discourses and fair spoken principles, to abuse the pretenders to reason, and he hath common prejudices for the more vulgar understandings. Amongst these I chose to consider such as are by way of principle or proposition.

1. The first great principle of temptation, I shall note, is a general mistake, which excuses very many of our crimes upon pretence of infirmity; calling all those sins; to which by natural disposition we are inclined (though by carelessness, and evil customs they are heightened to a habit) by the name of sins of infirmity: to which men suppose they have reason and title to pretend, if, when they have committed a crime, their conscience checks them, and they are troubled, and during the interval and abatement of the heats of desire, resolve against it, and commit it readily at the next opportunity; then they cry out against the weakness of their nature; and think, as long as this body of death is about them, it must be thus; and that this condition may stand with the state of grace: And then the sins shall return periodically, like the revolutions of a quartan ague, well and ill for ever, till death, surprizes the mistaker. This is a patron of sins, and makes the temptation prevalent by an authentic instrument; and they pretend the words of S. Paul: *For the good that I would, that I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do: For there is a law in my members rebelling against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of*

\* Rom. 7. 15.

*sin.* And thus the state of sin is mistaken for a state of grace, and the imperfections of the law are mis-called the affections and necessities of nature, that they might seem to be incurable, and the persons apt for an excuse, therefore, because for nature there is no absolute cure. But that these words of S. Paul may not become a savour of death, and instruments of a temptation to us, it is observable that the apostle by a fiction of person (as is usual <sup>a</sup> with him) speaks of himself not as in the state of regeneration, under the gospel, but under the difficulties, obscurities, insufficiencies, and imperfections of the law, which indeed he there contends to have been a rule good, and holy, apt to remonstrate our misery, because by its prohibitions and limits given to natural desires, it made actions (before indifferent) now to be sins; it added many curses to the breakers of it; and by an efficacy of contrariety it made us more desirous of what was now unlawful: but it was a covenant in which our nature was restrained, but not helped; it was provoked, but not sweetly assisted; our understandings were instructed, but our wills not sanctified, and there were no suppletories of repentance; every greater sin was like the fall of an angel, irreparable by any mystery, or express recorded or enjoined: Now of a man under this covenant he describes the condition to be such, that he understands his duty, but by the infirmities of nature he is certain to fall, and by the helps of the law not strengthened against it, nor restored after it, and therefore he calls himself under that notion, a miserable man, sold under sin, not doing according to the rules of the law or the dictates of his reason, but by the unaltered misery of his nature, certain to prevaricate. But the person described here is not S. Paul, is not any justified person, not so much as a Christian, but one who is under a state of direct opposition to the state of grace, as will manifestly appear if we ob-

<sup>a</sup> Ut videre est, Rom. 3. 7. Gal. 2. 18. 1 Cor. 12. et 10, 23, 29, 30, et 13. 9.

serve the antithesis from S. Paul's own characters; for the man here named is such, as in whom <sup>a</sup> *sin wrought all concupiscence, in whom sin lived, and slew him*, (so that he was <sup>b</sup> *dead in trespasses and sins*) and although *he did delight in the law after his inward man*, that is, his understanding had intellectual complacencies and satisfactions, which afterwards he calls <sup>c</sup> *‘serving the law of God with his mind’* (that is, in the first dispositions and preparations of his spirit) yet he could act nothing. For the law in his members did enslave him, and brought him into captivity to the law of sin; so that this person was full of actual and effective lusts, he was a slave to sin and dead in trespasses: but the state of a regenerate person is such, as to have <sup>d</sup> *‘crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, in whom sin did not reign, not only in the mind but even also not in the mortal body; over whom sin had no dominion, in whom the old man was crucified and the body of sin was destroyed, and sin not at all served. And to make the antithesis yet clearer, in the very beginning of the next chapter the apostle saith, ‘that the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death: under which law he complained immediately before, he was sold and killed, to shew the person was not the same in these so different and contradictory representments. No man in the state of grace can say, “The evil that I would not that I do;” if by evil he means any evil that is habitual, or in its own nature deadly.*

So that now let no man pretend an inevitable necessity to sin; for if ever it comes to a custom, or to a great violation, though but in a single act, it is a condition of carnality, not of spiritual life; and those are not the infirmities of nature, but the weaknesses of grace that make us sin so frequently; which the apostle truly affirms to the same purpose, <sup>e</sup> *‘The flesh*

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 7. v. 8. 11..    <sup>b</sup> vers. 22.    <sup>c</sup> vers. 25.    <sup>d</sup> Gal. 5. 24. Rom. 6. 6, 12, 14.

<sup>e</sup> Rom. 8. 2.    <sup>f</sup> Gal. 5. 17.

*lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that (ye cannot) or (that ye<sup>a</sup> do not do) the things that ye would.* This disability proceeds from the strength of the flesh, and weakness of the spirit; for he adds, *But if ye be led by the spirit ye are not under the law:* saying plainly, that the state of such a combat, and disability of doing good, is a state of a man under the law, or in the 'flesh, which he accounts all one: but every man that is sanctified under the gospel is led by the spirit, and walks in the spirit, and brings forth the fruits of the spirit. It is not our excuse, but the aggravation of our sin, that we fall again in despite of so many resolutions to the contrary; and let us not flatter ourselves into a confidence of sin by supposing the state of grace can stand with the custom of any sin: for it is the state, either of an *animalis homo* (as the apostle calls him) that is a man in pure naturals without the clarity of divine revelations, who cannot<sup>b</sup> perceive or understand the things of God; or else of the carnal man, that is a person, who though in his mind he is convinced, yet he is not yet freed from the dominion of sin; but only hath his eyes opened, but not his bonds loosed. For by the perpetual analogy and frequent expresses in scripture, the spiritual person, or the man redeemed by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, is free from the law, and the dominion, and the kingdom, and the power of all sin. <sup>c</sup> *For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

But sins of infirmity in true sense of scripture signify nothing but the sins of an unholy and an unsanctified nature; when they are taken for actions done against the strength of resolution out of the strength of natural appetite and violence of desire: and therefore in scripture the state of sin, and the state of infirmity is all one <sup>d</sup> *For when we were yet without*

<sup>a</sup> ἵνα μὴ ποιῇτε.<sup>b</sup> Rom. 7. 14.<sup>c</sup> Rom. 8. 6.<sup>d</sup> Rom. 5. 6 ὅρτων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν, τυτίςι ἀσθενῶν, without strength, that is, ungodly.



*strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly* (saith the apostle); the condition in which we were, when Christ became a sacrifice for us, was certainly a condition of sin and enmity with God, and yet this he calls a being without strength, or in a state of weakness and infirmity: which we, who believe all our strength to be derived from Christs' death, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of his ascension, may soon apprehend to be the true meaning of the word. And in this sense is that saying of our blessed Saviour, *The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are weak*; for therefore *Christ came into the world to save sinners*; those are the persons of Christ's infirmity, whose restitution and reduction to a state of life and health was his great design.<sup>a</sup> So that whoever sin habitually, that is, constantly, periodically, at the revolution of a temptation, or frequently, or easily, are persons who still remain in the state of sin and death. And their intervals of piety are but preparations to a state of grace, which they may then be, when they are not used to countenance or excuse the sin, or to flatter the person. But if the intermediate resolutions of emendation (though they never run beyond the next assault of passion or desire) be taken for a state of grace blended with infirmities of nature, they become destructive of all those purposes through our mistake, which they might have promoted, if they had been rightly understood, observed, and cherished.

Sometimes indeed the greatness of a temptation may become an instrument to excuse some degrees of the sin, and make the man pitiable, whose ruin seems almost certain because of the greatness and violence of the enemy, meeting with a natural aptness; but then the question will be, whither and to what actions that strong temptation carries him? whether to a work of a moral nature, or only to a small

<sup>a</sup> Vide August. l. 3. c. 17. de peccatorum meritis. & Enchir. 81.

irregularity? that is, whether to death or to a wound? for whatever the principle be, if the effect be death, the man's case was therefore to be pitied, because his ruin was the more inevitable; not so pitied as to excuse him from the state of death. For let the temptation be never so strong, every christian man hath assistances sufficient to support him, so 'as that without his own yielding, no temptation is stronger than that grace which God offers him; for if it were, it were not so much as a sin of infirmity; it were no sin at all. This therefore must be certain to us; when the violence of our passions or desires overcomes our resolutions, and fairer purposes against the dictate of our reason, that indeed is a state of infirmity, but it is also of sin and death, a state of immortification; because the offices of grace are to crucify the old man, that is, our former, and impurer conversation; to subdue the petulancy of our passions, to reduce them to reason, and to restore empire and dominion to the superior faculties. So that this condition in proper speaking is not so good as the infirmity of grace, but it is no grace at all: for *\* whoever are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*, those other imperfect, ineffectual resolutions are but the first approaches of the kingdom of Christ, nothing but the clarities of lightening, dark as soon as light; and they therefore cannot be excuses to us because the contrary weaknesses, (as we call them) do not make the sin involuntary, but chosen and pursued, and in true speaking is the strength of the lust, not the infirmity of a state of grace.

But yet there is a condition of grace, which is a state of little and imperfect ones, such as are called in scripture, *Smoaking flax and bruised reeds*: which is a state of the first dawning of the sun of righteousness, when the lights of grace new raise up ~~our~~ our eyes; <sup>b</sup> and then indeed they are weak and have <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Gal. 5. 24.    <sup>b</sup> 8. August. lib. de gratia & liber arbit. c. 17. & c. 29.

more dangerous neighbourhood of temptations and desires, but they are not subdued by them: they sin not by direct election, their actions criminal are but like the slime of Nilus, leaving rats half formed, they sin but seldom, and when they do it is in small instances, and then also by surprise, by inadvertency, and then also they interrupt their own acts and lessen them perpetually; and never do an act of sinfulness, but the principle is such as makes it to be involuntary in many degrees. For, when the understanding is clear, and the dictate of reason undisturbed; and determinate, whatsoever then produces an irregular action excuses not, because the action is not made the less voluntary by it; for the action is not made involuntary from any other principle but from some defect of understanding, either in act, or habit, or faculty. For where there is no such defect, there is a full deliberation according to the capacity of the man, and then the act of election that follows is clear, and full; and is that proper disposition which makes him truly capable of punishment, or reward respectively. Now although in the first beginnings of grace there is not a direct ignorance to excuse totally, yet because a sudden surprise or an inadvertency is not always in our power to prevent, these things do lessen the election and freedom of the action, and then because they are but seldom, and never proceed to any length of time, or any great instances of crime, and are every day made still more infrequent, because grace growing stronger, the observation and advertency of the spirit, and the attendance of the inner man grows more effectual and busy; this is a state of the imperfection of grace, but a state of grace it is. And it is more commonly observed to be expressed in the imperfection of our good actions, than in the irregularity of bad actions: and in this sense are those words of our blessed Saviour. *The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak*; which in this instance was not expressed in sin, but in a natural imperfection, which

then was a recession from a civility, a not watching with the Lord. And this is the only infirmity that can consist with the state of grace.

So that now we may lay what load we please upon our nature, and call our violent and unmortified desires by the name of an imperfect grace; but then we are dangerously mistaken and flatter ourselves into an opinion of piety, when we are in the gall of bitterness; so making our misery the more certain and irremediable, because we think it needs nothing but a perpetuity and perseverance to bring us to heaven. The violence of passion and desires is a misery of nature, but a perfect principle of sin; multiplying and repeating the acts, but not lessening the malignity. But sins of infirmity, when we mean sins of a less and lower malice, are sins of a less and imperfect choice, because of the unavoidable imperfection of the understanding. Sins of infirmity are always infirm sins, that is, weak and imperfect in their principle, and in their nature and in their design; that is, they are actions incomplete in all their capacities; but then passions and periodical inclinations consisting with a regular, and determined, and actual understanding must never be their principle; for whatsoever proceeds thence is destructive of spiritual life, and inconsistent with the state of grace. But sins of infirmity, when they pretend to a less degree of malignity, and a greater degree of excuse, are such as are little more than sins of pure and inculpable ignorance; for in that degree, in which any other principle is mixt with them, in the same degree they are criminal and inexcusable. For as a sin of infirmity is pretended to be little in its value and malignity: so it is certain, if it be great in the instance, it is not a sin of infirmity, that is, it is a state or act of death, and absolutely inconsistent with the state of grace.

2. Another principle of temptation, pregnant with sin, and fruitful of monsters, is a weaker pretence, which less wary and credulous persons abuse themselves

withal, pretending as a ground for their confidence and incorrigible pursuance of their courses, that they have a good meaning, that they intend sometimes well, and sometimes not ill, and this shall be sufficient to sanctify their actions and to hallow their sin. And this is of worse malice, when religion is the colour for a war, and the preservation of faith made the warrant for destruction of charity, and a zeal for God made the false light to lead us to disobedience to man, and hatred of idolatry is the husher of sacrilege, and the defiance of superstition the introducer of profaneness, and reformation made the colour for a schism, and liberty of conscience the way to a bold and saucy heresy; for the end may indeed hallow an indifferent action, but can never make straight a crooked and irregular. It was not enough for Saul to cry, for God and the sacrifice, that he spared the fat flocks of Amalek: and it would be a strange zeal and forwardness, that rather than the altar of incense should not smok, will burn assafœtida, or the marrow of a man's bones. For as God will be honoured by us, so also in ways of his own appointment:<sup>a</sup> for we are the makers of our religion, if we in our zeal for God do what he hath forbidden us. And every sin committed for religion, is just such a violence done to it, as it seeks to prevent or remedy,

And so it is, if it be committed for an end or pretence of charity as well as of religion; we must be curious that no pretence engage us upon an action that is certainly criminal in its own nature; charity may sometimes require our lives, but no obligation can endear a damnation to us; we are not bound to the choice of an eternal ruin to save another. Indeed so far as an option will go, it may concern the excrescencies of piety to choose by a tacit or express act of volition<sup>b</sup> *to become anathema for our brethren*, that is, by putting a case and fiction of law to suppose it

<sup>a</sup> Vide historiam uzzæ. 2 Sam. 6. cap. 6, 7, 8, 9 vers.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. 9. 3.

better and wish it rather, that I should perish than my nation. Thus far is charitable, because it is innocent; for as it is great love to our country, so it is no uncharitableness to ourselves: for such options always are ineffective, and produce nothing but rewards of charity, and a greater glory. And the holy Jesus himself, who only could be, and was effectively accursed to save us, got by it an exceeding and mighty glorification; and St. Paul did himself advantage by his charitable devotion for his countrymen. But since God never puts the question to us, so that either we or our nation must be damned, he having fixed every man's final condition upon his own actions in the virtue and obedience of Christ, if we mistake the expresses of charity, and suffer ourselves to be damned indeed for God's glory, or our brethren's good, we spoil the duty, and ruin ourselves when our option comes to act. But it is observable, that although religion is often pretended to justify a sin, yet charity is but seldom; which makes it full of suspicion, that religion is but the cover to the death's head, and at the best is but an accusing of God, that he is not willing, or not able to preserve religion without our irregular and impious co-operations. But, however, though it might concern us to wish ourselves rather accursed, than religion, or our prince, or our country should perish (for I find no instances that it is lawful so much as to wish it for the preservation of a single friend) yet it is against charity to bring such a wish to pass, and by sin to damn ourselves really for a good end either of religion or charity.

Let us therefore serve God, as he hath described the way; for all our access to him, being acts of his free concession and grace, must be by his own designation and appointment. We might as well have chosen, what shape our bodies should be of, as of what instances the substance of our religion should consist.

3. A third principle of temptation is, an opinion of prosecuting actions of civility, compliance, and society, to the luxation of a point of piety and stricter duty; and good natures, persons of humane and sweeter dispositions, are too apt to dash upon this rock of offence. But the evil that I would note, is, that there are some conditions of men, to whom a vice is so accustomed, that he that mingles with them must handle the crime and touch the venom. There are some vices which are national, there are some that are points of honour, some are civilities of entertainment, and they are therefore accounted unavoidable, because the understandings of men are degenerate as their manners, and it is accounted sottish and fantastical not to communicate in their accustomed loosenesses. Amongst some men all their first addresses are drinkings, their entertainments intemperate beyond the permissions of christian austerity; their drink is humorous, and their humours quarrellous, and it is dishonourable not to engage in duel, and venture your soul to ascertain an empty reputation. These inconveniencies rely upon false opinions, and vain fancies, having no greater foundation than the sottish discourses of ignorant and ungodly persons, and they have no peculiar and appropriate remedy, but a resolute severity of manners, and a consideration what is required of us as christians to confront against those fonder customs and expectations from us, as we engage in the puddles of the world and are blended in society.

To which purposes we must be careful not to engage too freely in looser company, never without business or unavoidable accidents; and when we mingle in affairs, it will concern our safety to watch, lest multitude of talk, goodness and facility of nature, the delight of company, and the freedom and ill customed civilities do by degrees draw us away from our guards and retirement of spirit. For in these cases every degree of dissolution disarms us of our strengths,

and if we give way so far, as we think it tolerable, we instantly and undiscernably pass into unlawful and criminal. But our best defences are deposited in a severe and prudent understanding, and discerning the sottishness of such principles, which represent vice in civil language, and propound a crime to you under the cover of kindness, which is just so much recompence as it is satisfaction to a condemned person, that he was accused by a witty orator, and sentenced by an eloquent judge. Remember always, that the friendships of the world are enmity with God, and that those societies, which are combined by relations of drink and wantonness, and impertinency and crimes, are either inconsiderable in civility, or reason, or reputation; no wise man is moved by their testimony, or discourses, and they are so impotent, rude, and undiscerning a theatre, that most commonly he is the best man who from thence is the worst reported and represented.

But in all the instances of this great evil, the very stating the question right is above half the victory, For it is a question between mistaken civility and certain duty; piety on one side, and the disguises of humanity on the other. God and man are the parties interested, and to counterpoise the influence of the sight and face of man, (which being in a visible communication, it is not in some natures to neglect or contradict) there are all the excellencies of God, the effects of his power, his certain presence, and omniscience, the severities of his judgment, and the sweetness and invitation of his mercies, besides the prudence, wisdom and satisfaction to the spirit when we wisely neglect such sottish and low abuses and temptations, to conform to the rules of reason and duty in compliance with the purposes of God and our own felicities.

3. These ill managed principles are dangers as universal as an infected air; yet there are some diseases more proper to the particular state of religion, first,



to young beginners in religion he represents the difficulties of religion, and propounds the greater examples of holy persons, and affrights them with those mountains of piety, observing where and upon what instances of severity his fancy will be most apprehensive and afflicted; and this he fails not often to represent with a purpose, that by believing no piety less than the greatest, can be good, he may despair of those heights and retire into the securities and indifferencies of a careless life. But this is to be cured by all those instruments of piety, which in special are incentives of the love of God, and endearments of spiritual and religious affections; and particularly by consideration of the divine goodness, *who knows whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but dust*, and will require no more of us than according to our powers and present capacities. <sup>a</sup> But the subject matter of this temptation is considered and refuted in the "Discourse of the Love of God."<sup>a</sup>

But most commonly young beginners are zealous and high, and not so easily tempted to a recession, till after a long time by a revolution of affections they are abated by a deservescency in holy actions; the Devil uses to prompt them on, not that he loves the piety and the progress, but that he would engage the person in imprudences and such forwardness of expresses, which either are in their own nature, indiscretions, or from which, by reason of the incapacity of the person, it is necessary for him to retire. A new convert is like a bird newly entered into a net, through which possibly she might pass without danger, if her fears and unreasonable strivings did not entangle her, but when by busy and disturbed flutterings she discomposes the order of it, she is tangled and unpenned, and made a prey to her treacherous enemy. Such are the undiscreeit strivings and too forward enterprises of new penitents, whom we shall ob-

<sup>a</sup> Part 2. in Explicat. of the Decalogue 1 Com.

serve too often undertaking great austerities, making vows and casting bands upon their liberty, and snares upon their persons, thinking nothing great enough to expiate their sin, or to present to God, or to endear their services, or secure their perseverance: and therefore they lay a load of fetters upon themselves, or rather cut off their legs, that they may never go back; therefore laying an obligation of vows and intolerable burthens on themselves, that by these they may by a compendium of piety redeem the time, and by those make it impossible to prevaricate. But the observation of the sad events and final accidents of these men hath given probation of the indiscretion of such furious addresses and beginnings. \* And it was prudently done of Meletius of Antioch when he visited the dioceses of Syria, and the several religious persons famous for severe undertakings, espying that Simeon Stylites dwelt upon a pillar, and had bound his leg with a strong chain of iron, he sent for a smith causing it to be knocked off, and said, "To a man that loves God his mind is a sufficient chain. For the loads of voluntary austerities rashly undertaken makes religion a burden, when their first heats expire; and their vows which are intended to secure the practice and perpetuate the piety, are but the occasions of an aggravate crime, and the vow does not secure the piety, but the weariness and satiety of the duty tempts to the breaking of the vow, or at least makes the man impatient, when he cannot persist with content, nor retire with safety.

It therefore concerns all spiritual guides to manage their new converts with sober counsels and moderate permissions, knowing that sublime speculations in the metaphysicks are not fit entertainment for an infant understanding. *There is milk for babes, and strong meat for men of riper piety*, and it will employ all the regular strength of young beginners to contest against

the reliques of those mischiefs, which remain since the expulsion of the old man, and to master those difficulties, which by the nature of the state are certainly consequent to so late mutation. And if we by the furies of zeal, and the impatience of mistaken piety, are violent and indiscreet in the destroying of our enemies, we probably may tread the thistle down, and trample upon all its appearances, and yet leave the root in the ground with haste and imprudent forwardness. Gentle and soft counsels are the surest enemies to your vice, and the best conservators and promoters of a virtuous state: but a hasty charge, and the conduct of a young leader may engage an early spirit in dangers and dishonours. And this temptation is of so much greater danger, because it hath a face of zeal and meets with all encouragements from without, every man being apt to cherish a new convert, and to enflame his new fires; but few consider the inconveniencies that are consequent to indiscreet beginnings, and the worse events usually appendent to such inconveniences.

Indeed it is not usual that prudence and a new kindled zeal meet in the same person: but it will therefore concern the safety of new converts, who cannot guide themselves, to give themselves up to the conduct of an experienced spiritual person, who being disinterest in those heats of the first apprehensions, and being long taught by the observation of the accidents of a spiritual life, upon what rocks rashness and zeal usually do engage us, can best tell what degrees and what instances of religion they may with most safety undertake: but for the general, it is best in the addresses of grace to follow the course of nature; let there be an infancy, and a childhood, and a vigorous youth, and by the divers and distant degrees of increment let the persons be established in wisdom and grace. But above all things let them be careful, that they do not lay upon themselves necessities of any lasting course; no vows of perpetuity in any in

stance of uncommanded action, or degree of religion; for he may alter in his capacity and exterior condition; he may see by experience that the particular engagement is imprudent, he may by the virtue of obedience be engaged on a duty inconsistent with the conveniences and advantages of the other, and his very loss of liberty in an uncommanded instance may tempt him to inconvenience. But then, for the single and transient actions of piety, although in them the danger is less, even though the imprudence be great, yet it were well if new beginners in religion would attempt a moderate and an even piety, rather than actions of eminency, lest they retire with shame, and be afflicted with scruple, when their first heats are spent, and expire in weariness and temptation. It is good to keep within the circuits of a man's affections, not stretching out all the degrees of fancy and desire, but leaving the appetites of religion rather unsatisfied, and still desiring more, than by stretching out the whole faculty leave no desires but what are fulfilled and wearied.

3. I shall not need here to observe such temptations which are direct invitations to sin, upon occasion of the piety of holy persons, such as are security, too much confidence, pride and vanity; these are part of every man's danger, and are to be considered upon their several arguments. Here I was only to note the general instruments of mischief. It remains now that I speak of such remedies and general antidotes, not which are proportioned to sins in special, but such as are preventions or remedies, and good advices in general.

1. Let every man abstain from all occasions of sin, as much as his condition will permit. And it were better to do some violence to our secular affairs, than to procure apparent or probable danger to our souls. For if we see not a way open and ready prepared to our iniquity, our desires oftentimes are not willing to be troubled, but opportunity gives life and activeness

to our appetities. If David had not from his towers beheld the private beauties of Bathshebah, Uriah had lived, and his wife been unattempted, but sin was brought to him by that chance, and entering at the casements of his eyes set his heart on fire, and dispoiled him of his robes of honour and innocence. The riches of the wedge of gold, and the beauty of the Babylonish garment made Achan sacrilegious upon the place, who was innocent enough in his preceding purposes: and therefore that soul that makes itself an object to sin, and invites an enemy to view its possessions, and live in the voicinage, loves the sin itself: and he that is pleased with the danger, would willingly be betrayed into the necessity and the pleasure of the sin; for he can have no other ends to entertain the hazards, but that he hath a further purpose to serve upon them; he loves the pleasure of the sin, and therefore he would make the condition of sinning certain and unavoidable. And therefore holy scripture, which is admirable and curious in the cautions and securities of virtue, does not determine its precepts in the precise commands of virtuous actions, but also binds up our senses, obstructs the passage of temptation, blocks up all the ways and avenues of vice, commanding us “to make a covenant with our eyes not to look upon a maid, not to sit with a woman that is a singer, not to consider the wine when it sparkles and gives its colour rightly in the cup, but to set a watch before our mouths, to keep the door of our lips, and many more instances to this purpose, that sin may not come so near as to be repulsed; as knowing sin hath then prevailed too far, when we give the denial to its solicitations.

We read a story of a virtuous lady that desired of St. Athanasius to procure for her, out of the number of the widows fed from the ecclesiastical corban, an old woman, morose, peevish, and impatient, that she might by the society of so ungentele a person have often occasion to exercise her patience, her forgiveness

and charity. I know not how well the counsel succeeded with her; I am sure it was not very safe: and to invite the trouble to triumph over it, is to wage a war of an uncertain issue, for no end but to get the pleasures of the victory, which oftentimes do not pay for the trouble, never for the danger. An Egyptian who acknowledged fire for his God, one day doing his devotions kissed his God after the manner of worshippers, and burnt his lips. It was not in the power of that false and imaginary deity to cure the real hurt he had done to his devoutest worshipper. Just such a fool is he that kisses a danger, though with a design of virtue, and hugs an opportunity of sin for an advantage of piety; he burns himself in the neighbourhood of the flame, and twenty to one but he may perish in its embraces. And he that looks out a danger that he may overcome it, does as did the Persian, who worshipping the sun, looked upon him when he prayed him to cure his sore eyes. The sun may as well cure a weak eye, or a great burden knit a broken arm, as a danger can do him advantage that seeks such a combat, which may ruin him, and after which he rarely may have this reward, that it may be said of him, he had the good fortune not to perish in his folly. It is easier to prevent a mischief than to cure it, and besides the pain of the wound, it is infinitely more full of difficulty to cure a broken leg, which a little care and observation would have preserved whole. To recover from a sin is none of the easiest labours that concern the sons of men, and therefore it concerns them rather not to enter into such a narrow straight, from which they can never draw back their head, without leaving their hair and skin, and their ears behind. If God please to try us, he means us no hurt, and he does it with great reason and great mercy; but if we go to try ourselves, we may mean well, but not wisely: for as it is simply unlawful for weak persons to seek a temptation, so for the more perfect

it is dangerous. <sup>a</sup> We have enemies enough without, and one of our own within: but we become our own tempter, when we run out to meet the world or invite the Devil home, that we may throw holy water upon his flames, and call the danger nearer, that we may run from it. <sup>b</sup> And certainly men are more guilty of many of their temptations than the Devil, through their incuriousness or rashness, doing as much mischief to themselves as he can. For he can but offer, and so much we do, when we run into danger. Such were those stories of St. Anthony provoking the Devil to battle; if the stories had been as true, as the actions were rash and ridiculous, the story had fastened a note of indiscretion upon that good man: though now I think there is nothing but a mark of fiction and falsehood on the writer.

2, Possibly without fault we may be engaged in a temptation, but then we must be diligent to resist the first beginnings: for when our strength is yet intire and unabated, if we suffer ourselves to be overcome, and consent to its first, and weakest attempts, how shall we be able to resist when it hath tired our contestation and wearied our patience, when we are weaker and prevailed upon; and the temptation is stronger and triumphant in many degrees of victory? By how much a hectic fever is harder to be cured than a tertian, or a consumption of the lungs than a little distillation of rheum upon the throat; by so much is it harder to prevail upon a triumphing lust than upon its first insinuations. But the ways of resisting are of a different consideration, proportionably to the nature of the crimes.

1. If the temptation be to crimes of pleasure and

<sup>a</sup> Sed quid ego omne malum nunquid. hominumq. maligni  
Hostis ad invidiam & torqueo? quum mala nostra  
Ex nostris concretu animis, genus & caput & vim,  
Quid sint, quid valeant, sumunt de corde parente.

*Prud. Hamar.*

<sup>b</sup> Eccles. 21. 27. Quum execratur impius Satanam suam ipsius animam  
execratur.

sensuality<sup>a</sup> let the resistance be by flight: for in case of lust even to consider the arguments against it, is half as great temptation as to press the arguments for it. For all considerations of such allurements makes the soul perceive something of its relish, and entertains the fancy. Even the pulling pitch from our clothes defiles the fingers, and some adherences of pleasant and carnal sins will be remnant, even from those considerations which stay within the circuit of the flames, though but with purpose to quench the fire and preserve the house. Chastity cannot suffer the least thought of the reproaches of the spirit of impurity; and it is necessary to all that will keep their purity and innocence against sensual temptations, to avoid every thing that may prejudice decorum. Libanius the sophister reports, that a painter being one day desirous to paint Apollo upon a laurel board,<sup>b</sup> the colours would not stick, but were rejected: out of which his fancy found out this extraction; that the chaste Daphne (concerning whom the poets feign that flying from Apollo, who attempted to ravish her, she was turned into a laurel tree), could not endure him even in painting, and rejected him after the loss of her sensitive powers. And indeed chaste souls do even to death resent the least image and offer of impurity: whatsoever is like a sin of uncleanness, he that means to preserve himself chaste must avoid, as he would avoid the sin; in this case there being no difference but of degrees between the inward temptation and the crime.

2. If the temptation be to crimes of troublesome and preternatural desires, or intellectual nature, let the resistance be made *conserta manu*, by a perfect sight, by the amassing of such arguments in general, and remedies in particular, which are apt to become deleteries to the sin, and to abate the temptation. But in both these instances the resistance must at least be

<sup>a</sup> Time videre unde possis cadere; noli fieri perversa simplicitate securus.—  
S. August.

<sup>b</sup> Καὶ ἀπείχεται τὸν ἑρῶτα καὶ τὸ δέδιον.



as soon as the attempt is, lest the violence of the temptation outrun our powers; for if against our full strength it hath prevailed to the first degrees, its progress to a complete victory is not so improbable, as were its successes at the first beginnings.

But to serve this and all other ends in the resisting and subduing a temptation, these following considerations have the best and most universal influence.

1. Consideration of the presence of God, who is witness of all our actions, and a revenger of all impiety. This is so great an instrument of fear and religion, that whoever does actually consider God to be present, and considers what the first consideration signifies, either must be restrained from the present temptation, or must have thrown off all the possibilities and aptnesses for virtue; such as are modesty, and reverence, and holy fear. For if the face of a man scatters all base machinations, and we dare not act our crimes in the theatre, unless we be impudent, as well as criminal; much more does the sense of a present deity fill the places of our heart with veneration and the awe of religion, when it is thoroughly apprehended and actually considered. We see not God, he is not in our thoughts, when we run into darkness to act our impurities. For we dare not commit adultery if a boy be present; behold the boy is sent off with an excuse, and God abides there, but yet we commit the crime: it is because, as Jacob said at Bethel, *God was in that place and we knew not of it*; and yet we neither breath, nor move an artery but in him, and by his assistance. <sup>a</sup> *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* And, <sup>b</sup> *all things are naked and open in his sight.* <sup>c</sup> *The iniquity of my people is very great: for they say the Lord seeth not.* <sup>d</sup> *Shall not he that made the eye see?* <sup>e</sup> *To him the night and day are both alike.* These and many more to the same design are the voices of scripture, that our spirits

<sup>a</sup> Act. 17.    <sup>b</sup> Heb. 4.    <sup>c</sup> Psal. 9.    <sup>d</sup> Ezek. 9.    <sup>e</sup> Jer. 23.

may retire into the beholding of God, to the purposes of fear and holiness, with whom we do cohabit by the necessities of nature, and the condition of our essence wholly in dependence; and then only we may sin securely, when we can contrive to do it, so that God may not see us..

There are many men who are servants of the eyes,\* as the apostle's phrase is, who when they are looked on, act virtue with much pompousness and theatrical bravery. But these men, when the theatre is empty, put off their upper garment, and retire into their primitive baseness. Diogenes endured the extremity of winter's cold, that the people might wonder at his austerity and philosophical patience: but Plato, seeing the people admiring the man, and pitying the sufferance, told them, that the way to make him warm himself, was for them to be gone and take no notice of him. For they that walk as in the sight of men serve that design well enough when they fill the public voice with noises and opinions, and are not by their purposes engaged to act in private. But they who are servants of the eyes of God, and walk as in the divine presence, perceive the same restraints in darkness, and closets, and grots, as in the light and midst of theatres, and that consideration imposes upon us a happy necessity of doing virtuously, which represents us placed in the eyes of our Judge. And therefore it was not unhandsomely said of a Jewish doctor; "If every man would consider God to be the great eye of the world, watching perpetually over all our actions, and that his hand is indefatigable, and his ear ever open, possibly sin might be extirpat-

\* Ephes. 6. ὁφθαλμοδουλοῦ.

<sup>b</sup> Non n. virtute ac studiis ut haberentur philosophi laborabant: sed vultum, et tristitiam & dissentientem à cæteris habitum pessimis moribus prætendebant.

Quintil. l. 1. proæm.

Ambitio, & luxuria & impotentia scenam desiderant; sanabis, ista si abecondis. Senec. ep. 95.

Magna vobis, si dissimulare non vultis, injecta necessitas probitatis, cum omnia agitis ante oculos judicis cuncta cernentis.---Boeth. lib. 5. consol. prosa ult.



ed from off the face of the earth. And this is the condition of beatitude; and the blessed souls within their regions of light and felicity cannot sin, because of the vision beatifical, they always behold the face of God; and those who partake of this state by way of consideration, which is essential to the condition of the blessed, and derive it into practice and discourse, in proportion to this shall retain an innocence and a part of glory.

For it is a great declension of human reason, and a disreputation to our spirits, that we are so wholly led by sense, that we will not walk in the regions of the spirit, and behold God by our eyes of faith and discourse; suffering our course of life to be guided by such principles, which distinguish our natures from beasts, and our conditions from vicious, and our spirits from the world, and our hopes from the common satisfactions of sense and corruption. The better half of our nature is of the same constitution with that of angels, and therefore although we are drenched in matter, and the communications of earth, yet our better part was designed to converse with God; and we had besides the eye of reason, another eye of faith put into our souls, and both clarified with revelations and demonstrations of the spirit, expressing to us so visible and clear characters of God's presence, that the expression of the same spirit is, *"We may feel him, for he is within us, and about us, and we are in him, and in the comprehensions of his embracings as birds in the air, or infants in the wombs of their pregnant mothers."* And that God is pleased not to communicate himself to the eyes of our body, but still to remain invisible, besides that it is his own glory and perfection, it is also no more to us, but like a retreat behind a curtain, where when we know our judge

<sup>a</sup> Act. 17. 27.

<sup>a</sup> Πνευματικοὶ εἰς τὸ θεῶν

<sup>b</sup> Μετὰ τὸ ὁρᾶμεν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸν κύριον αὐτῶν,

<sup>c</sup> Ἀνθρώπων ὅπου καὶ ἡ ἀποστολικὴ ἐκπαίδευσις

stands as an espiall, and a watch over our actions, we shall be sottish if we dare to provoke his jealousy because we see him not, when we know that he is close by, though behind the cloud.

There are some general impressions upon our spirits which by way of presumption and custom possess our persuasions and make restraint upon us to excellent purposes, <sup>a</sup> such as are the religion of holy places, reverence of our parents, presence of an austere, an honourable, or a virtuous person. For many sins are prevented by the company of a witness, especially if besides the ties of modesty we have also towards him an endearment of <sup>b</sup> reverence, and fair opinion, and if he were with us in our privacies, he would cause our retirements to be more holy. Saint Ambrose reports of the Virgin Mary, that she had so much piety and religion in her countenance and deportment, that divers persons, moved by the veneration and regard of her person, in her presence have first commenced their resolutions of chastity and sober living. However the story be, her person certainly was of so express and great devotion and sanctity, that he must needs have been of a very impudent disposition, and firm immodesty, who durst have spoken unhandsome language in the presence of so rare a person. And why then any rudeness in the presence of God? if that were as certainly believed and considered. For whatsoever amongst men can be a restraint of vice, or an endearment of virtue, all this is highly verified in the presence of God, to whom our conscience in its very concealments is as a fair table written in capital letters by his own finger; and then, if we fail of the advantage of this exercise, it must proceed either from our

<sup>a</sup> Aliquam habeat animus quem revereatur, cujus autoritate etiam secretum tuum sanctius fiat. Quid prodest inclusam esse conscientiam? patemus Deo.

*Senec. l. 1. ep. 11.*

<sup>b</sup> Tiberine] inter bona malaq. mixtus incolumi matre: instabilis sævitia, sed oblectus libidinibus, dum Sejanum dilexit timuitve: postremo in scelera simul ac dedecora prorupit, postquam remoto pudore & meta, suo tantum ingenio utbatur. *Tacit. l. 6.*



dishonourable opinion of God, or our own fearless inadvertency, or from a direct spirit of reprobation :<sup>a</sup> for it is certain, that this consideration is in its own nature apt to correct our manners, to produce the fear of God, and humility, and spiritual, and holy thoughts, and the knowledge of God, and of ourselves, and the consequents of all these, holy walking, and holy comforts. And by this only argument St. Paphnutius, and St. Ephrem are reported in church story to have converted two harlots from a course of dissolution to great sanctity and austerity.

But then this presence of God must not be a meer speculation of the understanding, though so only it is of very great benefit and immediate efficacy, yet it must reflect as well from the will as from discourse, and then only we walk in the presence of God, when by faith we behold him present, when we speak to him in frequent and holy prayers, when we beg aid from him in all our needs, and ask counsel of him in all our doubts, and before him bewail our sins and tremble at his presence. This is an entire exercise of religion, and beside that the presence of God serves to all this, it hath also especial influence in the disimprovement of temptations, because it hath in it many things contrariant to the nature and efficacy of temptations. Such as are consideration, reverence, spiritual thoughts, and the fear of God: for wherever this consideration is actual, there either God is highly despised or certainly feared. In this case we are made to declare; for our purposes are concealed only in an incuriousness and inconsideration; but whoever considers God as present, will in all reason be as religious as in a temple, the reverence of which place custom or religion hath imprinted in the spirits of

<sup>a</sup> Ὅρῳ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ὁρῶν ὄντας ἄλλο πλὴν  
 εἶδεν' ὅσα πρὸς ζῶμεν, ἢ κύβιν σκιά.  
 Τοιαῦτα τελεῖν εἰσὶν οὐκ ἐπὶ τρυφῇ  
 μηδὲν καὶ εἰς, εἰς αὐτοῖς εἰς θεῶν ἐνδο.

most men; so that as Ahasuerus said of Haman, "will he ravish the queen in my own house?" aggravating the crime by the incivility of the circumstance; God may well say to us, whose religion compels us to believe God every where present; since the divine presence hath made all places holy, and every place hath a Numen in it, even the eternal God, we unhallow the place and desecrate the ground whereon we stand, supported by the arm of God, placed in his heart, and enlightened by his eye, when we sin in so sacred a presence.

The second great instrument against temptation is *a meditation of Death*. Raderus reports, that a certain virgin, to restrain the inordination of intemperate desires, which were like thorns in her flesh, and disturbed her spiritual peace, she shut herself up in a sepulchre, and for twelve years dwelt in that scene of death. It were good we did so too, making tombs and coffins presential to us by frequent meditation. For God hath given us all a definitive arrest in Adam, and from it there lies no appeal<sup>b</sup> but it is infallibly and unalterably appointed for all men once to die, or to be changed, to pass from hence to a condition of eternity good or bad. Now because the law is<sup>c</sup> certain, and the time and manner of its execution is uncertain, and from this moment eternity depends, and that after this life the final sentence is irrevocable, that all the pleasures here are sudden, transient, and unsatisfying, and vain; he must needs be a fool, that knows not to distinguish moments from eternity; and since it is a condition of necessity, established by divine decrees, and fixed by the indispensable laws of nature, that we shall after a very

<sup>a</sup> Tota philosophia nihil est nisi meditatio mortis. Plato.

<sup>b</sup> Μόθ' ὁ θεὸς γὰρ θάνατόν ἐστι δῶρον ἱππῶ.

Ὅλόν' αἰὲς ζῶον, ὅτ' ἴσως πίνῃαι ναίει.

Æschyl.

<sup>c</sup> Ἀθανασία δ' ὅν ἐστι, ὅθ' ἀναισθηγῆς τὰ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν ἐκείναις λεγόμενα. Menand.

Vita humana prope uti ferrum est: si exerceas, conteritur; si non exerceas, tamen rubigo interficit. Cato apud A. Gell. l. 11. c. 2.

<sup>c</sup> Πρὸς μὲν τὰ ἄλλα πάντα ἀσφάλεια ἐστὶ ποιεῖσθαι, χάριν δὲ θανάτου πάντες ἀνθρώποι ἀπ' ἡλικίας πολλῆν ἔχουσιν. Metrodor. phil.



little duration pass on to a condition strange, not understood, then unalterable, and yet of great mutation from this, even of greater <sup>a</sup> distance from that, in which we are here, than this is from the state of beasts: this, when it is considered, must in all reason make the same impression upon our understandings and affections, which naturally all strange things, and all great considerations are apt to do, that is, create resolutions and results passing through the heart of man, such as are reasonable and prudent, in order to our own felicities, that we neglect the vanities of the present temptation, and secure our future condition, which will till eternity itself expires, remain such as we make it to be by our deportment in this short transition, and passage through the world.

And that this discourse is reasonable I am therefore confirmed, because I find it to be to the same purpose used by the spirit of God, and the wisest personages of the world. <sup>b</sup> *My soul is always in my hand, therefore do I keep thy commandments* saith David: he looked upon himself as a dying person, and that restrained all his inordinations, and so he prayed, <sup>c</sup> *Lord teach me to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.* <sup>d</sup> And therefore the Egyptians used to serve up a skeleton to their feasts, that the dissolutions and vapours of wine might be restrained with that bunch of myrrh, and the vanities of their eyes chastised by that sad object: for they thought it unlikely a man should be transported far with any thing low or vitious that looked long and often into the hallow eye pits of a death's head, or dwelt in a charnal house: and such considerations make all the importunity and violence of sensual desires to disband. For when a man stands perpetual-

<sup>a</sup> Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, eterni Natalis est. Per hoc spatium quod ab infantia patet in senectutem, in alium nature sumimus partum. Senec. ep. 102.

<sup>b</sup> Psal. 119.

<sup>c</sup> Psal. 90.

<sup>d</sup> Θάνατος πρὸ ὀφθαλμοῦ ἔχει σοὶ καὶ ἑμέραν ἧ ἡδὺν ὁδὸν ταπεινῶν ἐν θυμῷ, ἐπὶ ἀγῶνι ἐπιθυμίας τῆς. Epict. Enchir. cap. 28.

ly at the door of eternity, and as did John the Almoner, every day is building of his sepulchre, and every night one day of our life is gone and passed into the possession of death, it will concern us to take care that the door leading to hell do not open upon us, that we be not crushed to ruin by the stones of our grave, and that our death become not a consignment to us to a sad eternity. <sup>a</sup> For all the pleasures of the whole world and in all its duration, cannot make recompence for one hour's torment in hell, and yet if wicked persons were to sit in hell for ever without any change of posture, or variety of torment beyond that session; it were unsufferable beyond the endurance of nature; and therefore where little less than infinite misery in an infinite duration shall punish the pleasures of sudden and transient crimes, the gain of pleasure, and the exchange of banks here for a condition of eternal and miserable death, is a permutation fit to be made by none but fools and desperate persons, who made no use of a reasonable soul, but that they in their perishing might be convinced of unreasonableness, and die by their own fault.

The use that wise men have made, when they reduced this consideration to practise, is to believe every day to be the last of their life, for so it may be, and for aught we know it will; and then think what you would avoid, or what you would do, if you were dying, or were to-day to suffer death by sentence, and conviction; and that in all reason, and in proportion to the strength of your consideration you will do every day. <sup>b</sup> *For that is the sublimity of wisdom to do those things living, which are to be desired and chosen by dying persons.* An alarm of death every day renewed, and pressed earnestly, will watch a man so tame and soft

<sup>a</sup> Languenda tellus, & domus, & placens

Uxor: neq. harum, quas colis, arborum

Te prius invisas cupressos

Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.

Hor. l. 2. od. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Hic est apex summæ sapientiæ, ea viventem facere, quæ morienti essent appetenda.



that the precepts of religion will dwell deep in his spirit. But they *that make a covenant with the grave, and put the evil day far from them*, they are the men that eat spiders and toads for meat greedily, and a temptation to them is as welcome as joy, and they seldom dispute the point in behalf of piety or mortification, for they that look upon death at distance, apprehend it not, but in such general lines and great representments that describe it only as future and possible, but nothing of its terrors, or affrightments, or circumstances of advantage are discernable by such an eye that disturbs its sight and discomposes the posture, that the object may seem another thing, than what it is truly and really. St. Austin, with his mother Monica was led one day by a Roman prætor to see the tomb of Cæsar. Himself thus describes the corps:—<sup>a</sup> “It looked of a blue mould, the bone of the nose laid bare, the flesh of the nether lip quite fallen off, his mouth full of worms, and in his eye pits two hungry toads feasting upon the remanent portion of flesh and moisture; and so he dwelt in his house of darkness.” And if every person tempted by an opportunity of lust or intemperance would choose such a room for his privacy, that company for his witness, that object to allay his appetite, he would soon find his spirit more sober, and his desires obedient. I end with the counsel of St. Bernard. <sup>b</sup> “Let every man in the address to his actions consider, whether if he were now to die, he might safely and prudently do such an act, and whether he would not be infinitely troubled that death should surprize him in the present dispositions, and then let him proceed accordingly.” For since our treasure is in earthen vessels, which may be broken in pieces by the collision of ten thousand accidents, it were not safe to treasure up

<sup>a</sup> καὶ γὰρ ἐν σπέρματι ἐστὶν, Νέκυ μεγάλῃ βασιλεύσας. In epitaph. Sardanapali.

<sup>b</sup> Ἡσέλιος φίλα θυμῷ πᾶσι δυνάμεις ἄλλαι ἔσαντο  
Ἄνδρες, ἐν δὲ θανάτῳ γὰρ μίσην ἔσονται.

Fragm. Theog. in speculo monach.

wrath in them, for if we do, we shall certainly drink it in the day of recompense.

3. Before, and in, and after all this the blessed Jesus propounds prayer as a remedy against temptations: *' Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.* For besides that prayer is the great instrument of obtaining victory by the grace of God, as a fruit of our desires, and of God's natural and essential goodness; the very praying against a temptation, if it be hearty, fervent, and devout, is a denying of it, and part of the victory; for it is a disclaiming the entertainment of it, it is a positive rejection of the crime; and every consent to it is a ceasing to pray, and to desire remedy. And we shall observe that whensoever we begin to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, our prayers against it lessen as the consent increases; there being nothing a more direct enemy to the temptation than prayer, which as it is of itself a professed hostility against the crime, so it is a calling in auxiliaries from above to make the victory more certain. *If temptation sets upon thee, do thou set upon God,* for he is as soon overcome as thou art, as soon moved to good as thou art to evil, <sup>b</sup> he is as quickly invited to pity thee, as thou to ask him, provided thou doest not finally rest in the petition, but pass into action and endeavour by all means human and moral to quench the flame newly kindled in thy bowels, before it come to devour the marrow of the bones. For a strong prayer, and a lazy, incurious, unobservant walking, are contradictions in the discourses of religion. <sup>c</sup> Ruffinus tells us a story of a young man, solicited by the spirit of uncleanness, who came to an old religious person, and begged his prayers: it was in that age when God used to answer prayers of very holy persons by more clear and familiar signifi-

<sup>a</sup> Matth. 26. 41.

<sup>b</sup> — Hic levare functum

Pauperem laboribus

Vocatus atq. non vocatus audit.

<sup>c</sup> Lib. 3. 13.

Hor. l. 2. od. 11.

cations of his pleasure, than he knows now to be necessary: but after many earnest prayers sent up to the throne of grace, and the young man not at all bettered, upon consideration and enquiry of particulars, he found the cause to be, because the young man relied so upon the prayers of the old hermit, that he did nothing at all to discountenance his lust, or contradict the temptation. But then he took another course, enjoined him austerities and exercises of devotion, gave him rules of prudence and caution, tied him to work, and to stand upon his guard, and then the prayers returned in triumph, and the young man trampled upon his lusts. And so shall I and you, by God's grace, if we pray earnestly and frequently, if we watch carefully, that we be not surprized, if we be not idle in secret, nor talkative in public; if we read scriptures, and consult with a spiritual guide; and make religion to be our work, that serving of God be the business of our life, and our designs be to purchase eternity; then we shall walk safely or recover speedily, and by doing advantages to piety secure a greatness of religion, and spirituality to our spirits and understanding. But remember that, when Israel fought against Amalek, Moses' prayer, and Moses' hand secured the victory, his prayer grew ineffectual when his hands were slack, to demonstrate to us, that we must co-operate with the grace of God, praying devoutly, and watching carefully, and observing prudently, and labouring with diligence and assiduity.

### THE PRAYER.

ETERNAL God and most merciful Father, I adore thy wisdom, providence, and admirable dispensation of affairs in the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus, that thou who art infinitely good, doest permit so many sadnesses and dangers to discompose that order of things and spirits, which thou didst create innocent



and harmless, and doest design to great and spiritual perfections; that the emanation of good from evil by thy over-ruling power and excellencies, may force glory to thee from our shame, and honour to thy wisdom by these contradictory accidents and events; Lord have pity upon me in these sad disorders, and with mercy know my infirmities. Let me, by suffering what thou pleaseth, co-operate to the glorification of thy grace, and magnifying thy mercy; but never let me consent to sin, but with the power of thy majesty, and mightiness of thy prevailing mercy, rescue me from those throngs of dangers and enemies, which daily seek to deflour that innocence with which thou didst cloth my soul in the new birth. Behold O God, how all the spirits of darkness endcavour the extinction of our hopes, and the dispersion of all those graces, and the prevention of all those glories, which the holy Jesus hath purchased for every loving and obedient soul. Our very meat and drink are full of poison, our senses are snares, our business is various temptation, our sins are inlets to more, and our good actions made occasions of sins. Lord deliver me from the malice of the Devil, from the fallacies of the world, from my own folly, that I be not devoured by the first, nor cheated by the second, nor betrayed by myself; but let thy grace which is sufficient for me, be always present with me, let thy spirit instruct me in the spiritual warfare, arming my understanding, and securing my will, and fortifying my spirit with resolutions of piety, and incentives of religion, and deleteries of sin; that the dangers I am encompassed withal, may become unto me an occasion of victory, and triumph, through the aids of the Holy Ghost, and by the cross of the Lord Jesus, who hath for himself and all his servants triumphed over sin, and hell, and the grave, even all the powers of darkness, from which by the mercies of Jesus, and the merits of his passion, now and ever deliver me and all thy faithful people. Amen.

## DISCOURSE VI.

*Of Baptism.*

## PART I.

WHEN the holy Jesus was to begin his prophetic office, and to lay the foundation of his church on the corner-stone, he first tempered the cement with water and then with blood, and afterwards built it up by the hands of the spirit. Himself entered at that door by which his disciples for ever after were to follow him; for therefore he went in at the door of Baptism, that he might hallow the entrance which himself made to the house he was now building.

As it was in the old, so it is in the new creation; out of the waters God produced every living creature: and when at first the Spirit moved upon the waters, and gave life, it was the type of what was designed in the renovation. Every thing that lives now, is born of water and the Spirit; and Christ, who is our Creator and Redeemer in the new birth, opened the fountains and hallowed the stream: Christ who is our life went down into the waters of baptism, and we who descend thither find the effects of life; it is living water, of which who so drinks, needs not to drink of it again, for *it shall be in him a well of water, springing up to life eternal.*

But because every thing is resolved into the same principles from whence they are taken, the old world which by the power of God came from the waters, by their own sin fell into the waters again, and were all drowned, and only eight persons were saved by an ark: and the world renewed upon the stock and reserves of that mercy, consigned the sacrament of baptism in another figure; for then God gave his sign

<sup>a</sup> John 4. 14.

from heaven, that by water the world should never again perish: but he meant that they should be saved by water; for *\*baptism, which is a figure like to this, doth also now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

After this, the Jews report that the world took up the doctrine of baptisms, in remembrance that the iniquity of the old world was purged by water; and they washed all that came to the service of the true God, and by that baptism bound them to the observation of the precepts which God gave to Noah.

But when God separated a family for his own especial service, he gave them a sacrament of initiation, but it was a sacrament of blood, the covenant of circumcision: and this was the forerunner of baptism, but not a type; when that was abrogated, this came into the place of it, and that consigned the same faith which this professes: but it could not properly be a type, whose nature is by a likeness of matter or ceremony to represent the same mystery.<sup>b</sup> Neither is a ceremony, as baptism truly is, properly capable of having a type, itself is but a type of a greater mysteriousness: and the nature of types is, in shadow to describe by dark lines a future substance; so that although circumcision might be a type of the effects and graces bestowed in baptism, yet of the baptism or ablution itself, it cannot be properly; because of the unlikeness of the symbols and configurations, and because they are both equally distant from substances, which types are to consign and represent. The first Bishops of Jerusalem, and all the christian Jews for many years retained circumcision together with baptism; and Christ himself, who was circumcised, was also baptized; and therefore it is not so proper to call circumcision a type of baptism: it was rather a seal and sign of the same covenant to Abra-

<sup>a</sup> 1 Pet. 3. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Umbra in lege, imago in Evangelio, veritas in cœlo. S. Ambr.

ham and the fathers, and to all Israel, as baptism is, to all ages of the christian church.

And because this rite could not be administered to all persons, and was not at all times after its institution, God was pleased by a proper and specific type, to consign this rite of baptism, which he intended to to all, and that for ever; and God, when the family of his church grew separate, notorious, numerous, and distinct, he sent them into their own country by a baptism through which the whole nation passed: *for all the fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea;* so by a double figure foretelling, That as they were initiated to Moses' law by the cloud above and the sea beneath; so should all the persons of the church, men, women, and children, be initiated unto Christ by the spirit from above and the water below: for it was the design of the apostle in that discourse, to represent that the fathers and we were equal as to the privileges of the covenant; he proved that we do not exceed them, and it ought therefore to be certain that the do not exceed us, nor their children ours.

But after this, something was to remain which might not only consign the covenant which God made with Abraham, but be as a passage from the fathers through the synagogue to the church; from Abraham by Moses to Christ: and that was circumcision, which was a rite which God chose to be a mark to the posterity of Abraham, to distinguish them from the nations which were not within the covenant of grace, and to be *a seal of the righteousness of faith*, which God made to be the spirit and life of the covenant.

But because circumcision although it was ministered to all the males, yet it was not to the females; and although they and all the nation was baptized and initiated into *Moses in the cloud and the sea*, there-

fore the children of Israel by imitation of the patriarchs, the posterity of Noah, used also ceremonial baptisms to their women and to their proselytes, and to all that were circumcised; and the Jews deliver, That Sarah and Rebecca when they were adopted into the family of the church, that is, of Abraham and Isaac, were baptized: and so were all strangers that were married to the sons of Israel. And that we may think this to be typical of christian baptism, the doctors of the Jews had a tradition, that when the Messias would come, there should be so many proselytes that they could not be circumcised, but should be baptized. The tradition proved true, but not for their reason.

But that this rite of admitting into mysteries, and institutions, and offices of religion by baptisms, was used by the posterity of Noah, or at least very early among the Jews, besides the testimonies of their own doctors, I am the rather induced to believe, because the heathen had the same rite in many places, and in several religions: so they initiated disciples into the secrets of <sup>a</sup> Mithra; and the Priests of Cotyttus were called <sup>b</sup> Baptæ, because by baptism they were admitted into the religion; and they <sup>c</sup> thought murder, incest, rapes, and the worst of crimes, were purged by dipping in the sea, or fresh springs; and a proselyte is called in *Arrianus*, Βεβαμμενός, *intinctus*, a baptized person.

But this ceremony of baptizing was so certain and usual among the Jews, in their admitting proselytes and adopting into institutions, that to baptize and to make disciples are all one; and when John the Baptist <sup>d</sup> by an order from heaven went to prepare the way to the coming of our blessed Lord, he preached repentance, and baptized all that professed they did repent. He taught the Jews to live good lives, and

<sup>a</sup> Tertull. de præscrip. c. 40.

<sup>b</sup> Scholiast. in Ju. sat. 2. l. 1.

<sup>c</sup> O nimum faciles qui trista crimina cædis Toli flumina posse putatis aquâ.

<sup>d</sup> John 4. 1.



baptized with the baptism of a prophet, such as was not unusually done by extraordinary and holy persons in the change or renewing of discipline or religion. Whether John's baptism *was from heaven or from men*, Christ asked the Pharisees. That it was from heaven, the people therefore believed, because he was a prophet, and a holy person; but it implies also, that such baptisms are sometimes from men, that is, used by persons of an eminent religion, or extraordinary fame for the gathering of disciples and admitting proselytes; and the disciples of Christ did so too, even before Christ had instituted the sacrament for the christian church, the disciples that came to Christ were baptized by his apostles.

And now we are come to the gates of baptism. All these till John were but types and preparatory baptisms, and John's baptism was but the prologue to the baptism of Christ. The Jewish baptisms admitted proselytes to Moses and to the law of ceremonies; John's baptism called them to believe in the Messiah now appearing, and to repent of their sins, to enter into the kingdom which was now at hand, and preached that repentance which should be for the remission of sins. His baptism remitted no sins, but preached and consigned repentance, which in the belief of the Messiah whom he pointed to, should pardon sins. <sup>a</sup> But because he was taken from his office before the work was compleated, the disciples of Christ finished it. They went forth preaching the same sermon of repentance, and the approach of the kingdom, and baptized or made proselytes or disciples, as John did; only they (as it is probable) baptized in the name of Jesus, which it is not so likely John did. <sup>b</sup> And this very thing might be the cause of the different forms <sup>c</sup> of baptism recorded in the Acts,

<sup>a</sup> Audi quid Scripture doceant: Johannis baptisma non tam peccata dimisit, quàm baptisma pœnitentiæ fuit in peccatorum remissionem, idque in futurum remissionem quæ esset postea per sanctificationem Christi subsequutura.

*Hieronym. adv. Luciferian.*

<sup>b</sup> Vide supra Sect. 9. n. 1. <sup>c</sup> Acts 8. 16. Acta 2. 38.

of baptizing *In the name of Jesus*, and at other times *In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; the former being the manner of doing it in pursuance of the design of John's baptism; and the latter the form of institution by Christ for the whole christian church appointed after his resurrection: the disciples at first using promiscuously what was used by the same authority, though with some difference of mystery.

The holy Jesus having found his way ready prepared by the preaching of John, and by his baptism, and the Jewish manner of adopting proselytes and disciples into the religion, a way chalked out for him to initiate disciples into his religion, took what was so prepared, and changed it into a perpetual sacrament. He kept the ceremony, that they who were led only by outward things, might be the better called in, and easier enticed into the religion, when they entered by a ceremony which their nation always used in the like cases: and therefore without change of the outward act, he put into it a new spirit, and gave it a new grace and a proper efficacy. He sublimed it to higher ends, and adorned it with stars of heaven. He made it to signify greater mysteries, to convey greater blessings, to consign the bigger promises, to cleanse deeper than the skin, and to carry proselytes further than the gates of the institution. For so he was pleased to do in the other sacrament; he took the ceremony which he found ready in the custom of the Jews, where the *Major domo* after the Paschal supper gave bread and wine to every person of his family; he changed nothing of it without, but transferred the rite to greater mysteries, and put his own spirit to their sign and it became a Sacrament Evangelical. It was so also in the matter of excommunication, where the Jewish practice was made to pass into christian discipline: without violence and noise *old things became new*, while he fulfilled the law, making it up in full measures of the spirit.

By these steps baptism passed on to a divine evangelical institution, which we find to be consigned by three Evangelists. <sup>a</sup> *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* It was one of the last commandments the holy Jesus gave upon earth, when he taught his apostles *the things which concerned his kingdom.* <sup>b</sup> *For he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved:* but <sup>c</sup> *Unless a man be born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;* agreeable to the decretory words of God by Abraham in the circumcision, to which baptism does succeed in the consignation of the same covenant and the same spiritual promises, <sup>d</sup> *The uncircumcised child whose flesh is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.* <sup>e</sup> The Manichees, Seleucus, Hermias, and their followers, people of a day's abode and small interest, but of malicious doctrine, taught baptism not to be necessary, not to be used; upon this ground, because they suppose that it was proper to John to baptize with water, and reserved for Christ, as his peculiar, to *baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.* Indeed Christ baptized none otherwise. He sent his Spirit upon the Church in Pentecost and baptized them with fire, the Spirit appearing like a flame: but he appointed his apostles to baptize with water, and they did so, and their successors after them, every where and for ever, not expounding but obeying the præceptive words of their Lord, which were almost the last that he spake upon earth. And I cannot think it necessary to prove this to be necessary by any more arguments. For the words are so plain, that they need no exposition; and yet if they had been obscure, the universal practise of the apostles and the church for ever, is a sufficient declaration of the commandment.

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 28. 19.<sup>b</sup> Mark 16. 16.<sup>c</sup> John 3. 5.<sup>d</sup> Gen. 17. 14.<sup>e</sup> S. August. hæres. 46. 59.

No tradition is more universal, no not of scripture itself; no words are plainer, no not the ten commandments: and if any suspicion can be superinduced by any jealous or less discerning person, it will need no other refutation, but to turn his eyes to those lights by which himself sees scripture to be the word of God, and the commandments to be the declaration of his will.

But that which will be of greatest concernment in this affair, is to consider the great benefits that are conveyed to us in this sacrament; for this will highly conclude, that the precept was for ever, which God so seconds with his grace and mighty blessings; and the susception of it necessary, because we cannot be without those excellent things which are the graces of the sacrament.

1. The first fruit is, that in baptism we are admitted to the kingdom of Christ, presented unto him, consigned with his sacrament, enter into his militia, give up our understandings and our choice to the obedience of Christ, and in all senses that we can, become his disciples, witnessing a good confession, and undertaking a holy life: and therefore in scripture μαθητεύειν and βαπτίζειν, are conjoined in the significations, as they are in the mystery: it is a giving up our names to Christ, and it is part of the foundation or the first principles of the religion,<sup>a</sup> as appears in S. Paul's catechism; it is so the first thing, that it is for babes, and Neophytes, in which they are matriculated and adopted into the house of their father, and taken into the hands of their mother. Upon this account baptism is called in antiquity, <sup>b</sup> *Ecclesie janua, porta gratiae, et primus introitus sanctorum ad æternam Dei et ecclesie consuetudinem*: The gates of the church, the door of grace, the first entrance of the saints to an eternal conversation with God and the church.<sup>c</sup> *Sacramentum initiationis, et intrantium Christianismum*

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 6. 1.

<sup>b</sup> S. August. 1. 2. c. 1. de Cate. rudib.

*investituram*, S. Bernard calls it: 'The sacrament of initiation, and the investiture of them that enter into the religion;' <sup>a</sup> and the person so entering is called *πεισισμένος* and *συγκατατεθειμένη*, one of the religion, or a proselyte and convert, and one added to the number of the church, in imitation of that of S. Luke *ὁ κύριος προσετίθει σώζομένους τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ*, <sup>b</sup> God added to the church those that should be saved; just as the church does to this day and for ever, baptizing infants and catechumens: *σωζόμενοι προστιθονται*, they are added to the church, that they may be added to the Lord, and the number of the inhabitants of heaven.

2. The next step beyond this, is adoption into the covenant, which is an immediate consequent of the first presentation, 'this being the first act of man, that the first act of God. And this is called by <sup>c</sup> S. Paul, a being baptized in one spirit into one body, that is, we are made capable of the communion of saints, the blessings of the faithful, the privileges of the church: by this we are, as S. Luke calls it, *τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*, ordained, or disposed, put into the order of eternal life, being made members of the mystical body under Christ our head.

3. And therefore baptism is a new birth, by which we enter into the new world; the new creation, the blessings and spiritualities of the kingdom; and this is the expression which our Saviour himself used to Nicodemus, '*Unless a man be born of water and the spirit*': and it is by S. Paul called '*λῶτρον παλιγγενεσίας*, the laver of regeneration; for now we begin to be reckoned in a new census or account, God is become our Father, Christ our elder brother, the spirit the earnest of our inheritance, the church our mother, our food is the body and blood of our Lord; Faith is our learning, religion our employment, and our whole life is spiritual, and heaven the object of our hopes, and

<sup>a</sup> Just Martyr. Apl. 2.

<sup>b</sup> Acts 2. 47.

<sup>c</sup> τὸ βάπτισμα, ὃ θεοθεσίας χάριν

τυγχάνειν. Cyril. Hierosol. Catech. 2.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. 12. 13. Acts 13. 48.

<sup>e</sup> John

3. 3.

<sup>f</sup> Titus 3. 5.

the mighty price of our high calling. <sup>a</sup> And from this time forward we have a new principle put into us, the spirit of grace, which besides our soul and body, is a principle of action, of one nature, and shall with them enter into the portion of our inheritance. And therefore the primitive Christians, who consigned all their affairs, and goods, and writings with some marks of their Lord, usually writing *Ιησους Χριστος θεου υιος σωτηρ*, Jesus Christ, the Son of God our Saviour; they made it an abbreviature by writing only the capitals, thus: *I.X.Θ.Υ.Σ.* which the heathens in mockery and derision made *ιχθυς*, which signifies a fish, and they used it for Christ as a name of reproach: but the Christians owned the name, and turned it into a pious metaphor, and were content that they should enjoy their pleasure in the acrostic; but upon that occasion Tertullian speaks pertinently to this article <sup>b</sup> *Nos pisciculi, secundum ιχθυον nostrum Iesum Christum, in aqua nascimur.* Christ whom you call a fish, we acknowledge to be our Lord and Saviour; and we, if you please, are the little fishes, for we are born in water; thence we derive our spiritual life. And because from henceforward we are a new creation, the church uses to assign new relations to the catechumens, spiritual fathers and susceptors; and at their entrance into baptism, the Christians and Jewish proselytes did use to cancel all secular affections to their temporal relatives, <sup>c</sup> *Nec quicquam prius imbuuntur quàm contemnere Deos, exuere patriam, parentes, liberos, fratres vilia habere*, said Tacitus of the Christians: which was true in the sense only as Christ said, *He that doth not hate father or mother for my sake, is not worthy of me*; that is, he that doth not hate them *præ me*, rather than forsake me, forsake them, is unworthy of me.

4. In baptism all our sins are pardoned, according to the words of a prophet: <sup>d</sup> *I will sprinkle clean wa-*

<sup>a</sup> διὰ βαπτισμὸν ἀεχθὶ ἐτέρῃ βίῃ γίνεσθαι ἡμῶν, ἡ παλιγγενεσία ἢ σφραγίς ἢ φυλακτῆριον ἢ φάρισμας. *Damasc. l. 4. orth. fid. c. 10.* <sup>b</sup> *Lib de Baptis. c. 1.* <sup>c</sup> *Lib. 5. Hist.* <sup>d</sup> *Ezek. 36. 25.*

ter upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness. \* 'The catechumen descends into the font a sinner, he arises purified; he goes down the son of death, he comes up the son of the resurrection; he enters in the son of folly and prevarication, he returns the son of reconciliation; he stoops down the child of wrath, and ascends the heir of mercy; he was the child of the Devil, and now he is the servant and the son of God.' These are the words of Ven. Bede concerning this mystery. And this was ingeniously signified by that Greek inscription upon a font, which is so prettily contrived, that the words may be read after the Greek or after the Hebrew manner, and be exactly the same, ΝΙΨΟΝ ΑΝΟΜΗΜΑ, ΜΗ ΜΟΝΑΝ ΟΥΙΝ, <sup>b</sup> *Lord wash my sin, and not my face only.* And so it is intended and promised; \* *Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, and call on the name of the Lord,* said Ananias to Saul; *for Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, τῷ λόγῳ τῆ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, with the washing of water in the word, that is, baptism in the Christian religion: and therefore* <sup>d</sup> *Tertullian calls baptism lavacrum compendiatum, a compendious laver; that is, an entire cleansing the soul in that one action justly and rightly performed: in the rehearsal of which doctrine, it was not an unpleasant etymology that Anastasius Sinaita gave of baptism; βάπτισμα quasi βάπτισμα, ἐν ᾧ βάλλεται, ἡγουν πίπτει τὸ πλᾶϊσμα, in which our sins are thrown off; \* and they fall like leeches when they are full of blood and water, or like the chains from S. Peter's hands at the presence of the angel. Baptism is ἀνεκλόγητος ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, an en-*

\* Πιστεύον ἐν βάπτισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν. *Symb. Nicen. lib. 1. c. 3. in Johan.*

<sup>b</sup> Acts 22. 16.

<sup>c</sup> Eph. 5. 26.

<sup>d</sup> Lib. 4. adv. Marc. c. 9. ὁλίγισσα κλύζει

ἡ ἁγία τῶν ἀνθρώπων κακὰ. *Gr. pro.*

\* Annon ita credimus quia omne genus peccati cum ad salutare lavacrum venimus aufertur. *Origen. homil. 15. in Jesu.* Ecce quicquid iniquitatum sempiternus ignis excoquere et expiare vix posset, subito sacro fonte submersum est, et de æternis debitis brevissimo lavacri compendio cum indulgentissimo creditore transactum est. *Ambros. l. 1. c. 7. de pœn.* Qui dicit peccata in baptismo non funditus dimitti, dicat in mari rubro Ægyptios non veraciter mortuos. *S. Greg. M. l. 9. ep. 39.*

tire full forgiveness of sins, so that they shall never be called again to scrutiny.

<sup>a</sup> ——— *Omnia Dæmonis arma*

*Hic merguntur aquis, quibus ille renascitur infans*

*Qui captivus erat*——<sup>b</sup> the captivity of the soul is taken away by the blood of redemption, and the fiery darts of the Devil are quenched by these salutary waters; and what the flames of hell are expiating or punishing to eternal ages, that is washed off quickly in the holy font, and an eternal debt paid in an instant: for so sure as the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, so sure are our sins washed in this holy flood; for this is a red sea too; these waters signify the blood of Christ; these are they that have washed their robes,<sup>c</sup> and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, *Τὸ αἷμα καθαρίζει, τὸ ὕδωρ καθαρίζει, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἁγνίζει· τὸ αἷμα διὰ πνεύματος, τὸ πνεῦμα διὰ ὕδατος.* The blood of Christ cleanseth us, the water cleanseth us, the spirit purifies us; the blood by the spirit, the spirit by the water, all in baptism, and in pursuance of that baptismal state. <sup>d</sup> *These three are they that bear record in earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν ἵσι,* these three agree in one, or are to one purpose; they agree in baptism, and in the whole pursuance of the assistances which a Christian needs all days of his life: and therefore S. Cyril calls baptism *τῶν τῷ Χριστῷ παθημάτων ἀντίτυπον*, the antitype of the passions of Christ; it does the infancy of the work of grace, but not weakly; it brings from death to life; and though it brings us but to the birth in the new life, yet that is a greater change than is in all the periods of our growth to manhood, to a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

5. Baptism does not only pardon our sins, but puts us into a state of pardon for the time to come. For baptism is the beginning of the new life, and an ad-

<sup>a</sup> Phavorin. <sup>b</sup> Arator. l. 2. Hist. Apostol. <sup>c</sup> Rev. 7. 14. 1 John 1. 7. Acts 22. 16. Tit. 3. 5. Heb. 9. 14. <sup>d</sup> 1 John 5. 8.



mission of us into the evangelical covenant, which on our parts consists in a sincere and timely endeavour to glorify God by faith and obedience: and on God's part, he will pardon what is past, assist us for the future, and not measure us by grains and scruples, or exact our duties by the measure of an angel, but by the span of a man's hand. So that by baptism we are consigned to the mercies of God and the graces of the gospel; that is, that our pardon be continued and our piety be a state of repentance. And therefore that baptism which in the Nicene creed we profess to be for the remission of sins, is called in the Jerusalem creed, the baptism of repentance; that is, it is the entrance of a new life, the gate to a perpetual change and reformation, all the way continuing our title to, and hopes of forgiveness of sins. And this excellency is clearly recorded by S. Paul, *'The kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man hath appeared; not by works in righteousness which we have done: that is the formality of the gospel covenant, not to be exacted by the strict measures of the law, but according to his mercy he saved us, that is, by gentleness and remissions, by pitying and pardoning us, by relieving and supporting us, because he remembers that we are but dust; and all this mercy we are admitted to, and is conveyed to us, δια λείψε παλιγγενεσίας, by the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. And this plain evident doctrine was observed, explicated and urged against the Messalians, who said that baptism was like a razor that cut away all the sins that were past, or presently adhering, but not the sins of our future life;'* *ἡ δὲ γὰρ τὸ τοῦ μόνου ἐπαγγέλλεται τὸ μυστήριον, ἀλλὰ τὰ τέτων μείζω, καὶ τελειώτερα. ἀρραβὼν γὰρ ἐστὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῆς ἐσομένης ἀναστάσεως τύπος καὶ κοινωνία τῶν δεσποτικῶν παθημάτων, καὶ μετεσία τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἀναστάσεως, καὶ ἱμάτιον σωτηρίας, καὶ χιτῶν εὐφροσύνης καὶ σολὴ φωτοειδῆς, μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὸ φῶς.* This sacrament

<sup>a</sup> Titus 3. 4. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Theodoret. Ep. de divin. decre. cap. de Baptis.

promises more and greater things, 'It is the earnest of future good things, the type of the resurrection, the communication of, the Lord's passion, the partaking of his resurrection, the robe of righteousness, the garment of gladness, the vestment of light, or rather light itself.' And for this reason it is, that baptism is not to be repeated, because it does at once all that it can do at an hundred times: for it admits us to the condition of repentance and evangelical mercy, to a state of pardon for our infirmities and sins, which we timely and effectually leave: and this is a thing that can be done but once, as a man can begin but once; he that hath once entered in at this gate of life is always in possibility of pardon; if he be in a possibility of working and doing after the manner of a man, that which he hath promised to the Son of God. And this was expressly delivered and observed by S. Austin. <sup>a</sup> 'That which the apostle says, *Cleansing him with the washing of water in the word*, is to be understood, that in the same laver of regeneration and word of sanctification, all the evils of the regenerate are cleansed and healed: not only the sins that are past, which all are now remitted in baptism; but also those that are contracted afterwards by human ignorance and infirmity: <sup>b</sup> Not that baptism be repeated as often as we sin, but because by this which is once administered, is brought to pass that pardon of all sins, not only of those that are past, but also those which will be committed afterwards, is obtained.' The Messalians denied this, and it was part of their heresy in the undervaluing of baptism; and for it they are most excellently confuted by Isidore Pelusiot, in his third book, 195 epistle to the Count Hermin: whither I refer the reader.

In proportion to this doctrine it is, that the holy scripture calls upon us to live a holy life, in pursuance

<sup>a</sup> Lib. de Nuptiis. cap. 23. et Tract. 124 in Johan.  
13. p. 487.

<sup>b</sup> Vide Salmeron. tom.

of this <sup>a</sup> grace of baptism. And S. Paul recalls the lapsed Galatians to their covenant, and the grace of God stipulated in baptism: <sup>a</sup> *Ye are all children of God by faith in Jesus Christ*; that is, <sup>b</sup> *heirs of the promise*, and *Abraham's seed*: that promise which cannot be disannulled, increased, or diminished, but is the same to us as it was to Abraham; the same before the law and after. Therefore do not you hope to be justified by the law, for you are entered into the covenant of faith, and are to be justified thereby. This is all your hope, by this you must stand for ever, or you cannot stand at all; but by this you may: for you are God's children by faith, that is not by the law, or the covenant of works: And that you may remember whence you are going, and return again, he proves, that they are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, because they have been baptized into Christ, and so put on Christ. This makes you children, and such as are to be saved by faith, that is, a covenant, not of works, but of pardon in Jesus Christ, the author and establisher of this covenant. For this is the covenant made in baptism, that being justified, by his grace, we shall be heirs of life eternal: for by grace, that is, by favour, remission and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, ye are saved. This is the only way that we have of being justified, and this must remain as long as we are in hopes of heaven: for besides this we have no hopes, and all this is stipulated and consigned in baptism, and is of force after our fallings into sin and risings again. In pursuance of this, the same apostle declares, that the several states of sin, are so many recessions from the state of baptismal grace; and if we arrive to the direct apostacy and renouncing of, or a contradiction to, the state of baptism, we are then unpardonable, because we are fallen from our state of pardon. This S. Paul conditions most strictly, in his epistle to the Hebrews; <sup>c</sup> *This is the cove-*

<sup>a</sup> Gal. 3. 26.<sup>b</sup> Ver. 29.<sup>c</sup> Heb. 10. 16. &c.

*nant I will make in those days, I will put my laws in their hearts, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.* Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin; that is, our sins are so pardoned, that we need no more oblation, we are then made partakers of the death of Christ; which we afterwards renew in memory and eucharist, and representment. But the great work is done in baptism: for so it follows; *having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, that is, by the veil of his flesh, his incarnation.* But how do we enter into this? Baptism is the door, and the ground of this confidence for ever: for so he adds; *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* This is the consignation of this blessed state, and the gate to all this mercy: \* *Let us therefore hold fast the profession of our faith;* that is, the religion of a Christian; the faith into which we were baptized; for that is the faith that justifies and saves us; Let us therefore hold fast this profession of this faith, and do all the inter-medial works, in order to the conservation of it, such as are assembling in the communion of saints, (the use of the word and sacrament is included in the precept) mutual exhortation, good example, and the like: For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, that is, if we sin against the profession of this faith, and hold it not fast, but let the faith and the profession go wilfully, (which afterwards he calls *a treading under foot the Son of God, accounting the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and a doing despite to the spirit of grace;* viz. which moved upon those waters, and did illuminate him in baptism) if we do this, there is no more sacrifice for sins, no more deaths of Christ, into which you may be baptized; that is, you are fallen

\* τῆς ἐλπίδος, scil. ad futurum respiciens. ἐπισυναγωγὴ παράκλησις κατανόησις.

from the state of pardon and repentance, into which you were admitted in baptism, and in which you continue, so long as you have not quitted your baptismal rights and the whole covenant. Contrary to this, is that which S. Peter calls *making our calling and election sure*; that is, a doing all that which may continue us in our state of baptism, and the grace of the covenant. And between these two states, of absolute apostacy from, and entirely adhering to, and securing this state of calling and election, are all the intermedial sins, and being overtaken in single faults, or declining towards vicious habits; which in their several proportions, are degrees of danger and insecurity; which S. Peter calls *ᾠθήν τε καθαρισμόν τῶν πάλαι αὐτῶν ἁμαρτιῶν*, ‘a forgetting our baptism, or purification from our sins.’ And in this sense are those words, <sup>b</sup> ‘The just shall live by faith;’ that is, by that profession which they made in baptism: from which, if they swerve not, they shall be supported in their spiritual life. It is a grace, which by virtue of the covenant consigned in baptism does like a centre, transmit effluxes to all the periods and portions of our life: our whole life, all the periods of our succeeding hopes are kept alive by this. This consideration is of great use, besides many other things, to reprove the folly of those who in the primitive church deferred their baptism till their death bed: Because baptism is a laver of sanctification, and drowns all our sins, and buries them in the grave of our Lord, they thought they might sin securely upon the stock of an after-baptism; for unless they were strangely prevented by a sudden accident, a death-bed baptism they thought would secure their condition: but early some of them durst not take it, much less in the beginning of their years, that they might at least gain impunity for their follies and heats of their youth. Baptism hath influence into the pardon of all our sins committed in all the days

<sup>a</sup> 2 Pet. 1. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Vide part. 2. disc. 9. of repentance.

of our folly and infirmity; and so long as we have not been baptized, so long we are out of the state of pardon, and therefore an early baptism is not to be avoided, upon this mistaken fancy and plot upon heaven: it is the greater security towards the pardon of our sins, if we have taken it in the beginning of our days.

5. The next benefit of baptism, which is also a verification of this, is a sanctification of the baptized person by the spirit of grace:

*\* Sanctus in hunc cælo descendit spiritus amnem,*

*Cælestique sacras fonte maritat aquas:*

*' Concipit unda Deum, sanctamque liquoribus almis*

*Edit ab æterno semine pogeniem.*

The Holy Ghost descends upon the waters of baptism, and makes them prolific, apt to produce children unto God: and therefore S. Leo compares the font of baptism, to the womb of the blessed Virgin, when it was replenished with the Holy Spirit. And this is the baptism of our dearest Lord: his ministers baptize with water; our Lord at the same time verifies their ministry with giving the Holy Spirit: They are joined together by S. Paul, *<sup>b</sup> We are by one spirit baptized into one body*; that is, admitted into the church by baptism of water and the spirit. This is that which our blessed Lord calls *'a being born of water and of the spirit'*; by water we are sacramentally dead and buried, by the spirit we are made alive. But because these are mysterious expressions, and according to the style of scripture, high and secret in spiritual significations, therefore that we may understand what these things signify, we must consider it by its real effects, and what it produces upon the soul of a man.

1. It is the suppletory of original righteousness, by which Adam was at first gracious with God, and

<sup>a</sup> Paulin. Ep. 12. ad Serenum.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 12. 13.  
de Spir. S. cap. 15.

<sup>c</sup> John 3. 5. S. Basil.

which he lost by his prevarication. It was in him a principle of wisdom and obedience, a relation between God and himself, a title to the extraordinary mercies of God, and a state of friendship: when he fell, he was discomposed in all; the links of the golden chain and blessed relation were broken; and it so continued in the whole life of man, which was stained with the evils of this folly, and the consequent mischiefs: and therefore when we began the world again, entering into the articles of a new life, God gave us his spirit, to be an instrument of our becoming gracious persons, and of being in a condition of obtaining that supernatural end which God at first designed to us. And therefore as our baptism is a separation of us from unbelieving people: so the descent of the Holy Spirit upon us in our baptism, is a consigning or marking us for God, as the sheep of his pasture, as the soldiers of his army, as the servants of his household: we are so separated from the world, that we are appropriated to God, so that God expects of us duty and obedience; and all sins are acts of rebellion and undutifulness: of this nature was the sanctification of Jeremy and John the Baptist from their mother's womb; that is, God took them to his own service by an early designation, and his spirit marked them to a holy ministry. To this also relates that of S. Paul, whom God by a decree separated from his mother's womb to the ministry of the gospel: the decree did antedate the act of the spirit, which did not descend upon him until the day of his baptism. What these persons were in order to exterior ministries, that all the faithful are in order to faith and obedience, consigned in baptism by the spirit of God, to a perpetual relation to God, in a continual service and title to his promises. And in this sense the spirit of God is called *σφραγίς*, *a seal, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise.*

<sup>a</sup> 2 Cor. 1. 22. Eph. 1. 13. Eph. 4. 30. John 6. 27. S. Cyril. Hieros. Catech. 3.

τὸ μὲν ὕδωρ καθαίρει τὸ σῶμα; τὸ δὲ πνεῦμά σφραγίζει τὴν ψυχὴν  
 The water washes the body, and the spirit seals the soul; viz. to a participation of those promises which he hath made, and to which we receive a title by our baptism.

2. The second effect of the spirit, is light or illumination; that is, the Holy Spirit becomes unto us the author of holy thoughts, and firm persuasions, and sets to his seal that the word of God is true, into the belief of which we are then baptized, and makes faith to be a grace, and the understanding resigned, and the will confident, and the assent stronger than the premises, and the propositions to be believed, because they are beloved, and we are taught the ways of godliness after a new manner, that is, we are made to perceive the secrets of the kingdom, and to love religion, and to long for heaven and heavenly things, and to despise the world, and to have new resolutions, and new perceptions, and new delicacies, in order to the establishment of faith, and its increments and perseverance. <sup>a</sup> Τῇ λαμπρόσῃ ψυχῇ ἀπὸ κατακλυσμῶ ἀνιδρυθεὶς ὁ θεὸς οἰονεὶ θρόνον αὐτὴν ἑαυτῷ κατεργάζει. God sits in the soul when it is illuminated in baptism, as if he sat in his throne; that is, he rules by a firm persuasion, and entire principles of obedience. And therefore baptism is called in scripture, φωτισμός, and the baptized φωτισθέντες, illuminated: <sup>b</sup> *Call to mind the former days, in which ye were illuminated*: and the same phrase is in the sixth to the Hebrews, where the parallel places expound each other. For that which S. Paul calls, ἡπαξ φωτισθέντες, once illuminated; he calls after λαβόντες τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, <sup>c</sup> a receiving the knowledge of the truth: and that you may perceive this to be wholly meant of baptism, the apostle expresses it still by its synonymas, *Tasting of the heavenly gift, and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, sprinkled in our hearts from an evil conscience, and washed in our bodies with*

<sup>a</sup> S. Basil. in Psal. 28.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. 10. 32

<sup>c</sup> Heb. 6. 4.



*pure water*: all which also are a syllabus or collection of the several effects of the graces bestowed in baptism. But we are now instancing in that which relates most properly to the understanding, in which respect the Holy Spirit also is called anointing or unction; and the mystery is explicated by S. John, \* *The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things.*

3. The Holy Spirit descends upon us in baptism, to become the principle of a new life, to become a holy seed, springing up to holiness, and is called by S. John, <sup>†</sup> *σπέρμα θεοῦ*; the seed of God; and the purpose of it we are taught by him, *Whosoever is born of God that is, he that is regenerated and entered into this (new birth) doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* The spirit of God, is the spirit of life; and now that he by the spirit is born anew, he hath in him that principle, which, if it be cherished, will grow up to life, to life eternal. And this is the spirit of sanctification, the victory of the world, the deletory of concupiscence, the life of the soul, and the perpetual principle of grace sown in our spirits in the day of our adoption to be the sons of God, and members of Christ's body. But take this mystery in the words of S. Basil; <sup>‡</sup> *There are two ends proposed in baptism, to wit, to abolish the body of sin, that we may no more bring forth fruit unto death; and to live in the spirit, and to have our fruit to sanctification.* The water represents the image of death, receiving the body in its bosom, as in a sepulchre. But the quickening spirit sends upon us a vigorous *δύναμιν*, power or efficacy, even from the beginning renewing our souls from the death of sin unto life. For as our mortification is perfected in the water, so the spirit works life in us. To this

\* 1 John. 2. 20. 27.

† 1 John 3. 9,

‡ Lib. de Spir. S. c. 18.

purpose is the discourse of S. Paul, <sup>a</sup> having largely discoursed of our being baptized into the death of Christ, he adds this as the corollary of all, *He that is dead is freed from sin*; <sup>b</sup> that is, being mortified, and buried in the waters of baptism, we have a new life of righteousness put into us; we are quitted from the dominion of sin, and are planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

4. But all these intermedial blessings tend to a glorious conclusion, for baptism does also consign us to a holy resurrection. It takes the sting of death from us by burying us together with Christ; and takes off sin, which is the sting of death, and then we shall be partakers of a blessed resurrection. This we are taught by S. Paul, <sup>c</sup> *Know we not that so many of us as are baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.* That declares the real event in its due season. But because baptism consigns it, and admits us to a title to it, we are said with S. Paul, <sup>d</sup> *to be risen with Christ in baptism: buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, which hath raised him from the dead:* which expression I desire, to be remembered, that by it we may better understand those other sayings of the apostle, of putting on Christ in baptism, putting on the new man, &c. for these only signify ἐπιχρίσματα, or the design on God's part, and the endeavour and duty on man's: we are then consigned to our duty, and to our reward; we undertake one, and have a title to the other: and though men of ripeness and reason enter instantly into their portion of work, and have present use of the assistances, and something of their reward in hand; yet we cannot

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 6. 7. ver. 5. 6.

<sup>b</sup> χριστὸν ποιεῖν, i. e. ἀποκρίνωαι. Plutar. Vide disc. 9. of repentance.

<sup>c</sup> Rom. 6. 3. 5.

<sup>d</sup> Col. 2. 12.

conclude, that those that cannot do it presently, are not baptized rightly, because they are not in capacity to put on the new man in righteousness, that is, in an actual holy life; for they may put on the new man in baptism, just as they are risen with Christ: which because it may be done by faith, before it is done in real event, and it may be done by sacrament and design, before it be done by a proper faith; so also may our putting on the new man be. It is done sacramentally, and that part which is wholly the work of God does only antedate the work of man, which is to succeed in its due time, and is after the manner of preventing grace: but this is by the by; in order to the present article, baptism is by Theodoret called μέσσία τῆς θεοποτιχῆς ἀναστάσεως, a participation of the Lord's resurrection.

5- And lastly, by baptism we are saved; that is, we are brought from death to life here, and that is the first resurrection, and we are brought from death to life hereafter, by virtue of the covenant of the state of grace, into which in baptism we enter, and are preserved from the second death, and receive a glorious and an eternal life: *“He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved,* said our blessed Saviour; and, *“according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*

After these great blessings so plainly testified in scripture, and the doctrine of the primitive church, which are regularly consigned and bestowed in baptism, I shall less need to descend to temporal blessings, or rare contingencies, or miraculous events, or probable notices of things less certain: of this nature are those stories recorded in the writings of the church, that *“that Constantine was cured of a leprosy in baptism; Theodosius recovered of his disease, being baptized by the Bishop of Thessalonica; and a paralytic Jew was cured as soon as he became a chris-*

\* Mark 16. 16.    † Tit. 3. 5.    ‡ Niceph. l. 7. c. 35. Socr. l. 5. c. 6. Idem l. 7. c. 7.

tian, and was baptized by Atticus of C. P., and Bishop Arnulph baptizing a leper, also cured him, said Vincentius Bellovacensis. It is more considerable, which is generally and piously believed by very many eminent persons in the church, that at our baptism God assigns an angel guardian: for then the catechumen being made a servant and a brother to the Lord of Angels, is sure not to want the aids of them who *<sup>a</sup>pitch their tents round about them that fear the Lord:* and that this guard and ministry is then appointed, when themselves are admitted into the inheritance of of the promises, and their title to salvation is hugely agreeable to the words of St. Paul, *<sup>b</sup>Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?* where it appears that the title to the inheritance is the title to this ministry, and therefore must begin and end together. But I insist not on this, though it seems to me hugely probable. All these blessings put into one syllabus, have given to baptism many honourable appellatives in scripture, and other divine writers, calling it *<sup>c</sup>ἀναγέννησιν, παλιγγενεσίαν, ὄχημα πρὸς Θεόν, ὄχημα πρὸς ἑρανόν, βασιλείας πρῶξενον, τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς βασιλείας τῶν ἑρανῶν, μεγάλην περιτομήν ἀχειροποιήτον, ἀνακαίνισιν, ἐπερώτημα, ἄρραβῶνα, ἐνέχυρον, ἀπόδειξιν, ἀνάγκησιν, ἔνδυμα φωτεινόν, Sacramentum vitæ & æternæ salutis.* A new birth, a regeneration, a renovation, a chariot carrying us to God, the great circumcision, a circumcision made without hands, the key of the kingdom, the paranymp of the kingdom, the earnest of our inheritance, the answer of a good conscience, the robe of light, the sacrament of a new life, and of eternal salvation. *ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ.* This is celestial water, springing from the sides of the rock, upon the which the church was built, when the rock was smitten with the rod of God.

<sup>a</sup> Psal. 34. 7.<sup>b</sup> Heb. 1. 14.<sup>c</sup> Basil. Theodor. Epiphani. Nazianz. Col. 2. 2. Cyril. Hieros. Dionys. Areop. August. l. 2. c. 13. Contra Crescon. Gram.

It remains now; that we inquire what concerns our duty, and in what persons, or in what dispositions baptism produces all these glorious effects: for the sacraments of the church work in the virtue of Christ, but yet only upon such as are servants of Christ, and hinder not the work of the spirit of grace. For the water of the font, and the spirit of the sacrament, are indeed to wash away our sins, and to purify our souls: but not unless we have a mind to be purified. The sacrament works pardon for them that hate their sin, and procures grace for them that love it. They that are guilty of sins, must repent of them, and renounce them, and they must make a profession of the faith of Christ, and give, or be given up to the obedience of Christ, and then they are rightly disposed. *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved*, saith Christ; and St. Peter called out to the whole assembly, *Repent and be baptized every one of ye*. Concerning this, Justin Martyr gives the same account of the faith and practise of the church. “Ὅσοι ἄν πεισθῶσι καὶ πιστεύσωσι, &c. “Whosoever are persuaded, and believe those things to be true, which are delivered and spoken by us, and undertake to live accordingly, they are commanded to fast and pray, and to ask of God remission of their former sins, we also praying together with them, and fasting. Then they are brought to us where water is, and are regenerated in the same manner of regeneration by which we ourselves are regenerated. For in baptism, St. Peter observes there are two parts, <sup>d</sup> the body and the spirit; that is, *σὰρκὸς ἀποθέσις* <sup>e</sup> *ῥύψις*, *the putting away the filth of the flesh*, that is, the material washing; and this is baptism no otherwise than a dead corpse is a man: the other is, *συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώρημα*, *the answer of a good conscience towards God*; that is, the conversion of the soul to God, that is the effective disposition in which baptism does save us. And in the same sense are those sayings of

<sup>a</sup> Mark 16. 16. <sup>b</sup> Acts 2. 28.

<sup>c</sup> Apol. ad Anton. Cæs.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Pet. 3. 21.

the primitive doctors to be understood, <sup>a</sup> *Anima non lavatione sed responsione sancitur*, the soul is not healed by washing, viz. alone, but by the answer, the ἐπερώτημα in St. Peter, the correspondent of our part of the covenant: for that is the perfect sense of this unusual expression. And the effect is attributed to this, and denied to the other, when they are distinguished. So Justin Martyr affirms, <sup>b</sup> the only baptism that can heal us, is repentance, and the knowledge of God. For what need is there of that baptism that can only cleanse the flesh and the body? Be washed in your flesh from wrath and covetousness, from envy and hatred, and behold the body is pure. And Clemens Alexandrinus upon the proverbial saying ἴσθι μὴ λῆτρω ἀλλὰ νοῦ καθαρός, be not pure in the laver, but in the mind; adds, I suppose that an exact and a firm repentance is a sufficient purification to a man; if judging and considering ourselves for the facts we have done before, we proceed to that which is before us, considering that which follows, and cleansing or washing our mind from sensual affections, and from former sins. Just as we use to deny the effect to the instrumental cause, and attribute it to the principal in the manner of speaking, when our purpose is to affirm this to be the principal, and of chief influence. So we say, It is not the good lute, but the skilful hand that makes the music. It is not the body but the soul that is the man; and yet he is not the man without both. For baptism is but the material part in the sacrament, <sup>c</sup> it is the spirit that giveth life; whose work is faith and repentance begun by himself, without the sacrament, and consigned in the sacrament, and actuated and increased in the co-operation of our whole life: and therefore baptism is called in the Jerusalem creed, ἐν βάπτισμα μελάνοις εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; and by Justin Martyr, λῆτρον τῆς μετανοίας καὶ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ θεοῦ

<sup>a</sup> Tertull. de resur. carn.<sup>b</sup> Ad Tryphon, Jud.<sup>c</sup> Dial. cum Tryph.

ὕπὲρ τῆς ἀνομίας τῶν λαῶν τῷ θεῷ γέγονεν, The baptism of repentance and the knowledge of God, which was made for the sins of the people of God. He explains himself a little after, τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ μόνον καθαρῖσαι τὰς μετανοήσαντας δυνάμενον, Baptism that can only cleanse them that are penitent. "*In sacramentis Trinitati occurrit Fides credentium & professio quæ apud acta conficitur Angelorum, ubi miscentur cœlestia & spiritualia semina, ut sancto germine nova possit nascentium indoles procreari, ut dum Trinitas cum fide concordat, qui natus fuerit sæculo, renascatur spiritualitèr Deo. Sic fit hominum Pater Deus, sancta sit Mater ecclesia,*" said Optatus.<sup>a</sup> The faith and profession of the believers, meets with the ever blessed Trinity, and is recorded in the register of angels, where heavenly and spiritual seeds are mingled; that from so holy a spring may be produced a new nature of the regeneration, that while the Trinity (viz. that is invocated upon the baptized) meets with the faith of the catechumen, he that was born to the world may be born spiritually to God." So God is made a father to the man, and the holy church a mother. Faith and repentance strip the old man naked, and make him-fit for baptism; and then the holy Spirit moving upon the waters, cleanses the soul, and makes it to put on the new man, who grows up to perfection and a spiritual life, to a life of glory, by our verification of the undertaking in baptism on our part, and the graces of the spirit on the other. For the waters pierce no further than the skin, till the person puts off his affection to the sin that he hath contracted; and then he may say, *Aquæ intraverunt usque ad animam meam*, The waters are entered even unto my soul, to purify and cleanse it, by the washing of water, and the renewing by the Holy Spirit. The sum is this, βαπτίζόμενοι φωτιζόμεθα, φωτιζόμενοι υἱοποιέμεθα, υἱοπαύμενοι τελειέμεθα, πειλειέμενοι ἀθανατιζόμεθα, being bap-

tized, we are illuminated; being illuminated, we are adopted to the inheritance of sons; being adopted, we are promoted towards perfection; and being perfected, we are made immortal.

*Quisquis in hos fontes vir venerit, exeat inde  
Semideus, tactis citò nobilitetur in undis.*

This is the whole doctrine of baptism, as it is in itself considered, without relation to rare circumstances, or accidental cases: and it will also serve to the right understanding of the reasons why the church of God hath in all ages baptized all persons, that were within her power, for whom the church could stipulate that they were or might be relatives of Christ, sons of God, heirs of the promises, and partners of the covenant, and such as did not hinder the work of baptism upon their souls. And such as were not only persons of age and choice, but the infants of christian parents. For the understanding and verifying of which truth, I shall only need to apply the parts of the former discourse to their particular case; premising first these propositions.



### *Of Baptizing Infants.*

#### PART II.

BAPTISM is the key in Christ's hand, and therefore opens as he opens, and shuts by his rule: and as Christ himself did not do all his blessings and effects unto every one, but gave to every one as they had need, so does baptism. Christ did not cure all men's eyes, but them only that were blind. Christ *came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*; that is, they that lived in the fear of God, according to the covenant in which they were debtors, were indeed improved and promoted higher by Christ, but not called



to that repentance to which he called the vicious gentiles, and the adulterous persons among the Jews, and the hypocritical pharisees. There are some so innocent, that they need no repentance, saith the scripture, meaning, that though they do need contrition for their single acts of sin, yet they are within the state of grace, and need not repentance, as it is a conversion of the whole man: and so it is in baptism, which does all its effects upon them that need them all; and some upon them that need but some: and therefore as it pardons sins to them that have committed them and do repent and believe; so to the others who have not committed them, it does all the work which is done to the others, above or besides that pardon.

2. When the ordinary effect of a sacrament is done already by some other efficiency or instrument, yet the sacrament is still as obligatory as before, not for so many reasons or necessities, but for the same commandment. Baptism is the first ordinary current, in which the Spirit moves and descends upon us; and where God's Spirit is, they are the sons of God; for Christ's Spirit descends upon none, but them that are his; and yet Cornelius, who had received the Holy Spirit, and was heard by God, and visited by an angel, and accepted in his alms, and fastings, and prayers, yet was tied to the susception of baptism. To which may be added, that the receiving the effects of baptism beforehand, was used as an argument the rather to minister to baptism. The effect of which consideration is this: that baptism and its effect may be separated, and do not always go in conjunction; the effect may be before, and therefore much rather may it be after its susception; the sacrament operating in the virtue of Christ, even as the Spirit shall move; according to that saying of St. Austin <sup>b</sup> *Sacrosancto lavacro inchoata innovatio novi*

<sup>a</sup> Acts 10. 47.

<sup>b</sup> Aug. de moribus Eccles. Cath. l. 1. c. 25. Bern. Serm. de cœna Dom.

*hominis perficiendo perficitur in aliis citius, in aliis tardius.* And St. Bernard, *Lavari quidem cito possumus, sed ad sanandum nullâ curatione opus est.* The work of regeneration that is begun in the ministry of baptism, is perfected in some sooner and some later; we may soon be washed, but to be healed is a work of a long cure.

3. The dispositions which are required to the ordinary susception of baptism are not necessary to the efficacy, or required to the nature of the sacrament; but accidentally, and because of the superinduced necessities of some men. And therefore the conditions are not regularly to be required, but in those accidents. It was necessary for a gentile proselyte to repent of his sins, and to believe in Moses' law, before he could be circumcised; but Abraham was not tied to the same conditions, but only to faith in God; but Isaac was not tied to so much; and *circumcision was not of Moses, but of the fathers*: and yet after the sanction of Moses' law, men were tied to conditions, which were then made necessary to them that entered into the covenant, but not necessary to the nature of the covenant itself. And so it is in the susception of baptism: if a sinner enters into the font it is necessary he be stripped of those appendages which himself sewed upon his nature, and then repentance is a necessary disposition. If his understanding hath been a stranger to religion, polluted with evil principles, and a false religion, it is necessary he have an actual faith, that he be given in his understanding up to the obedience of Christ: and the reason of this is plain, because in these persons there is a disposition contrary to the state and effects of baptism; and therefore they must be taken off by their contraries, faith and repentance, that they may be reduced to the state of pure receptives. And this is the sense of those words of our blessed Saviour, *Unless ye become like one of these little ones, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*; that is, ye cannot be admitted into the gospel

covenant unless all your contrarieties and impediments be taken from you, and you be as apt as children to receive the new immissions from heaven. And this proposition relies upon a great example, and a certain reason; the example is our blessed Saviour, who was *Nullius pœnitentiæ debitor*, he had committed no sin, and needed no repentance; he needed not to be saved by faith, for of faith he was the author and finisher, and the great object, and its perfection and reward, and yet he was baptized by the baptism of John, the baptism of repentance. And therefore it is certain, that repentance and faith are not necessary to the susception of baptism, but necessary to some persons that are baptized. For it is necessary we should much consider the difference. If the sacrament in any person may be justly received in whom such dispositions are not to be found, then the dispositions are not necessary or intrinsic to the susception of the sacrament; and yet some persons coming to this sacrament, may have such necessities of their own as will make the sacrament ineffectual without such dispositions. These I call necessary to the person, but not to the sacrament; that is, necessary to all such, but not necessary to all absolutely. And faith is necessary sometimes where repentance is not, and sometimes repentance and faith together, and sometimes otherwise.<sup>a</sup> When Philip baptized the eunuch, he only required of him to believe, not to repent. But St. Peter, when he preached to the Jews, and converted them only required repentance: which although in their case implied faith, yet there was explicit stipulation for it;<sup>b</sup> they had crucified the Lord of Life, and if they would come to God by baptism, they must renounce their sin: that was all that then stood upon. It is as the case is, or as the persons have superinduced necessities upon themselves. In children the case is evident, as to the one part, which

<sup>a</sup> Acts 9. 27. Acts 2. 33.<sup>b</sup> Acts 3. 15.

is equally required; I mean repentance: the not doing of which cannot prejudice them as to the susception of baptism; because they having done not evil, are not bound to repent; and to repent is as necessary to the susception of baptism as faith is; but this shews that they are accidentally necessary; that is, not absolutely, not to all, not to infants; and if they may be excused from one duty, which is indispensably necessary to baptism, why they may not from the other, is a secret which will not be found out by these whom it concerns to believe it.

And therefore when our blessed Lord made a stipulation and express commandment for faith, with the greatest annexed penalty to them that had it not, *He that believeth not shall be damned*, the proposition is not to be verified or understood as relative to every period of time; for then no man could be converted from infidelity to the christian faith, and from the power of the Devil to the kingdom of Christ, but his present infidelity shall be his final ruin. It is not therefore γνώμη, but χρεία, not a sentence but a use, a prediction and intermination. It is not like that saying, "God is true and every man a liar," "Every good, and every perfect gift is from above:" for these are true in every instant without reference to circumstances; but *He that believeth not shall be damned*, is a prediction, or that which in rhetoric is called χρεία, or a use, because this is the affirmation of that which usually or frequently comes to pass; such as this, *He that strikes with a sword, shall perish by the sword; He that robs a church shall be like a wheel*, of a virtiginous and unstable estate; *He that loves wine and oil shall not be rich*. And therefore it is a declaration of that which is universally or commonly true; but not so, that in what instance soever a man is not a believer, in that instant it is true to say he is damned; for some are called the third, some the sixth, some the ninth hour, and they that come in being first called at the eleventh hour, shall have their reward: so that

this sentence stands true at the day and the judgement of the Lord, not at the judgement or day of man. And in the same necessity as faith stands to salvation, in the same it stands to baptism; that is, to be measured by the whole latitude of its extent. Our baptism shall no more do all its intention, unless faith supervene, than a man is in possibility of being saved without faith; it must come in its due time, but is not indispensably necessary in all instants and periods. Baptism is the seal of our election and adoption; and as election is brought to effect by faith and its consequents, so is baptism; but to neither is faith necessary, as to its beginning and first entrance. To which also I add this consideration, that actual faith is necessary, not to the susception, but to the consequent effects of baptism; appears, because the church and particularly the apostles, did baptize some persons who had not faith, but were hypocrites, such as were Simon, Magus, Alexander the copper-smith, Demus and Diotrephes; and such was Judas when he was baptized, and such were the Gnostic teachers. For the effect depends upon God, who knows the heart, but the outward susception depends upon them who do not know it; which is a certain argument; that the same faith that is necessary to the effect of the sacrament, is not necessary to its susception; and if it can be administered to hypocrites, much more to infants; if to those who really hinder the effect, much rather to them that hinder not. And if it be objected, that the church does not know but the pretenders have faith, but she knows infants have not. I reply, that the church does not know but the pretenders hinder the effect, and are contrary to the grace of the sacrament; but she knows that infants do not. The first possibly may receive the grace, the other cannot hinder it.

But beside these things, it is considerable, That when it is required, that persons have faith: it is true, they that require baptism should give a reason why

they do; so it was in the case of the eunuch baptized by Philip. But this is not to be required of others that do not ask it, and yet they may be of the church, and of the faith: for by faith is also understood the christian religion, and the christian faith, is the christian religion; and of this a man may be, though he make no confession of his faith; as a man may be of the church, and yet not be of the number of God's secret ones: and to this more is required than to that; to the first it is sufficient that he be admitted by a sacrament or a ceremony: which is infallibly certain, because hypocrites and wicked people are in the visible communion of the church, and are reckoned as members of it, and yet to them there was nothing done but the ceremony administered; and therefore when that is done to infants, they also are to be reckoned in the church communion. And indeed in the examples of scripture, we find more inserted into the number of God's family by outward ceremony than by the inward grace: of this number were all those who were circumcised the eighth day, who were admitted thither, as the woman's daughter was cured in the gospel, by the faith of their mother, their natural parents, or their spiritual. To whose faith it is as certain God will take heed, as to their faith who brought one to Christ who could not come himself, the poor paralytic; for when Christ saw their faith, he cured their friend; and yet it is to be observed, that Christ did use to exact faith, actual faith, of them that came to him to be cured, *\* According to your faith be it unto you.* The case is equal in its whole kind. And it is considerable what Christ saith to the poor man that came in behalf of his son, *\* All things are possible to him that believeth,* it is possible for a son to receive the blessing and benefit of his father's faith; and it was so in his case, and is possible to any; for to faith all things are possible. And as to the event

*\* Mat. 9. 29.*

*\* Mark 9. 23.*

of things, it is evident in the story of the gospel, that the faith of their relatives was equally effective to children, and friends, or servants, absent or sick, as the faith of the interested person was to himself. As appears beyond all exception in the case of the friends of the paralytic, let down with cords through the tiles; <sup>a</sup> of the centurion in behalf of his servant: <sup>b</sup> of the noble man, for his son sick at Capernaum; of the Syro-phœnician for her daughter: and Christ required faith of no sick man, but of him that presented himself to him, and desired for himself that he might be cured, <sup>c</sup> as it was in the case of the blind men. Though they could believe, yet Christ required belief of them that came to him on their behalf. And why then it may not be so or is not so in the case of infants baptism, I confess it is past my skill to conjecture. The reason on which this further relies is contained in the next proposition.

4. No disposition or act of man can deserve the first grace, or the grace of pardon: for so long as a man is unpardoned, he is an enemy to God, and as a dead person; and unless he be prevented by the grace of God, cannot do a single act in order to his pardon and restitution: so that the first work which God does upon a man, is so wholly his own, that the man hath nothing in it, but to entertain it, that is, not to hinder the work of God upon him: and this is done in them that have in them nothing that can hinder the work of grace, or in them who remove the hindrances; of the latter sort are all sinners, who have lived in a state contrary to God; of the first are they who are prevented by the grace of God, before they can choose, that is, little children, and those that become like unto little children. So that faith and repentance are not necessary at first to the reception of the first grace, but by accident. If sin have drawn curtains, and put bars and coverings to the windows, these must be

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 9. 13.<sup>b</sup> John 4. 50.<sup>c</sup> Mat. 9. 28.

taken away; and that is done by faith and repentance: but if the windows be not shut, so that the light can pass through them, the eye of heaven will pass in and dwell there. . <sup>a</sup> *No man can come unto me unless my Father draw him*; that is, the first access to Christ is nothing of our own, but wholly of God; and it is as in our creation, in which we have an obediential capacity, but co-operate not; only if we be contrary to the work of grace, that contrariety must be taken off, else there is no necessity: and if all men according to Christ's saying, <sup>b</sup> *must receive the kingdom of God as little children*, it is certain little children do receive it; they receive it as all men ought, that is, without any impediment or obstruction, without any thing within that is contrary to that state.

5. Baptism is not to be estimated as one act, transient and effective to single purposes, but it is an entrance to a conjugation and a state of blessings. All our life is to be transacted by the measures of the gospel covenant, and that covenant is consigned by baptism; there we have our title and adoption to it, and the grace that is then given to us is like a piece of leaven put into a lump of doe: and faith and repentance do in all the periods of our life, put it into fermentation and activity. Then the seed of God is put into the ground of our hearts, and repentance waters it, and faith makes it *subactum solum*, the ground and furrows apt to produce fruits: and therefore faith and repentance are necessary to the effect of baptism, not to its susception; that is, necessary to all those parts of life in which baptism does operate not to the first sanction or entering into the covenant. The seed may lie long in the ground, and produce fruits in its due season, if it be refreshed with the former and the latter rain, that is, the repentance that first changes the state, and converts the man, and afterwards returns him to his title, and recalls him from

<sup>a</sup> John 6. 44.

<sup>b</sup> Mark 10. 15.



his wanderings, and keeps him in the state of grace, and within the limits of the covenant: and all the way faith gives efficacy and acceptation to this repentance, that is, continues our title to the promise, of not having righteousness exacted by the measures of the law, but by the covenant and promise of grace, into which we entered in baptism, and walk in the same all the days of our life.

6. The Holy Spirit which descends upon the waters of baptism, does not instantly produce its effects in the soul of the baptized; and when he does, it is irregularly and as he please. *The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and no man knoweth whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth*; and the catechumen is admitted into the kingdom, yet *the kingdom of God cometh not with observation*: and this saying of our blessed Saviour was spoken of the *kingdom of God that is within us*, that is, the spirit of grace, the power of the gospel put into our hearts, concerning which he affirmed, that it operates so secretly, that it comes not with outward shew, *neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there*: which thing I desire the rather be observed, because in the same discourse which our blessed Saviour continued to that assembly <sup>b</sup> he affirms this kingdom of God to belong unto little children, this kingdom that cometh not with outward significations, or present expresses; this kingdom that is within us. For the present the use I make of it is this, that no man can conclude that this kingdom of power, that is, the Spirit of sanctification, is not come upon infants, because there is no sign or expression of it. It is within us therefore it hath no signification. It is the seed of God; and it is no good argument to say, here is no seed in the bowels of the earth, because there is nothing green upon the face of it. For the church gives the sacrament, God gives the grace of The sacrament. But because he does not always give

<sup>a</sup> Luke 17. 20. 21.      <sup>b</sup> Luke 18. 16.

it at that instant in which the church gives the sacrament; (as if there be a secret impediment in the suscipient) and yet afterwards does give it, when the impediment is removed (as to them that repent of that impediment) it follows, that the church may administer rightly, even before God gives the real grace of the sacrament; and if God gives this grace afterwards by parts, and yet all of it is the effect of that covenant which was consigned in baptism; he that defers some may defer all, and verify every part as well as any part. For it is certain, that in the instance now made, all the grace is deferred; in infants it is not certain but that some is collated or infused: however, be it so or no, yet upon this account the administration of the sacrament is not hindered.

7. When the scripture speaks of the effects, of, or dispositions to baptism, it speaks in general expressions, as being most apt to signify a common duty, or a general effect, or a more universal event, or the proper order of things; but those general expressions do not *supponere universalitèr*, that is, are not to be understood exclusively to all that are not so qualified, or universally of all suscipients, or of all the subjects of the proposition. When the prophets complain of the Jews, that they are fallen from God, and turned to idols, and walk not in the way of their fathers; and at other times, the scripture speaks the same thing of their fathers, that they walked perversely toward God, *starting aside like a broken bow*: In these and the like expressions the holy scripture uses a synecdoche, or signifies many only, under the notion of a more large and indefinite expression; for neither were all the fathers good, neither did all the sons prevaricate: but among the fathers there were enough to recommend to posterity by way of example; and among the children, there were enough to stain the reputation of the age: but neither the one part nor the other was true of every single person. St. John the Baptist spake to the whole audience, saying, *O gene-*

*ration of vipers!* and yet he did not mean that all Jerusalem and Judea that went out to be baptized of him, were such; but he under an indeterminate reproof, intended those that were such, that is, especially the priests and the pharisees. And it is more considerable yet, in the story of the event of Christ's sermon in the synagogue, upon his text taken out of Isaiah, \* *All wondered at his gracious words, and bare him witness.* And a little after, *All they in the synagogue were filled with wrath*, that is, it was generally so: but hardly to be supposed true of every single person, in both the contrary humours and usages. Thus Christ said to the apostles, *Ye have abidden with me in my temptations*; and yet Judas was all the way a follower of interest and the bag, rather than Christ; and afterwards none of them all did abide with Christ in his greatest temptations. Thus also, to come nearer the present question, the secret effects of election and of the spirit, are in scripture attributed to all that are of the outward communion. So St. Peter calls all the Christian strangers of the eastern dispersion, *Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*: and St. Paul saith of all the Roman Christians, and the same of the Thessalonians, that their *faith was spoken of in all the world*; and yet amongst them it is not to be supposed, that all the professors had an unreprieveable faith, or that every one of the church of Thessalonica was an excellent and a charitable person: and yet the apostle useth this expression, *Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other, aboundeth.* These are usually significant of a general custom or order of things, or duty of men, or design, and natural or proper expectation of events; such are these also in this very question. *As many of you as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*; that is, so it is regularly, and so it will be in its due

\* Luke 4. 22. 28.

\* 1 Pet. 1. 2.

\* 2 Thess. 1. 2.

time, and that is the order of things, and the designed event: but from hence we cannot conclude of every person, and in every period of time; *this man hath been baptized, therefore now he is clothed with Christ he hath put on Christ*: nor thus, *This person cannot in a spiritual sense as yet put on Christ: therefore he hath not been baptized*, that is, *he hath not put him on in a sacramental sense*. Such is the saying of St. Paul, *Whom he hath predestinated, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified*: this also declares the regular event, or at least the order of things, and the design of God, but not the actual verification of it to all persons. These sayings concerning baptism, in the like manner are to be so understood, that they cannot exclude all persons from the sacrament, that have not all those real effects of the sacrament at all times, which some men have at some times, and all men must have at some time or other, viz. when the sacrament obtains its last intention. But he that shall argue from hence, that children are not rightly baptized, because they cannot in a spiritual sense put on Christ, concludes nothing, unless these propositions did signify universally, and at all times, and in every person, and in every manner: which can no more pretend to truth, than that all Christians are God's elect, and all that are baptized, are saints; and all that are called, are justified; and all that are once justified, shall be saved finally. These things declare only the event of things, and their order, and the usual effect, and the proper design, in their proper season, in their limited proportions.

8. A negative argument for matters of fact in scripture, cannot conclude a law, or a necessary, or a regular event. And therefore supposing, that it be not intimated, that the apostles did baptize infants, it fol-

lows not that they did not: and if they did not, it does not follow that they might not, or that the church may not. For it is unreasonable to argue: The scripture speaks nothing of the baptism of the holy Virgin Mother, therefore she was not baptized. The words and deeds of Christ are infinite which are not recorded: and of the acts of the apostles we may suppose the same in their proportion: and therefore what they did not is no rule to us, unless they did it not because they were forbidden. So that it can be no good argument to say, the apostles are not read to have baptized infants, therefore infants are not to be baptized: but thus; We do not find that infants are excluded from the common sacraments and ceremonies of Christian institution, therefore we may not presume to exclude them. For although the negative of a fact is no good argument, yet the negative of a law is a very good one. We may not say, the apostles did not, therefore we may not: but thus, they were not forbidden to do it, there is no law against it, therefore it may be done. No man's deeds can prejudicate a divine law expressed in general terms, much less can it be prejudiced by those things that were not done. *That which is wanting cannot be numbered, cannot be effectual; therefore, Baptize all nations,* must signify all that it can signify, all that are reckoned in the capitations and accounts of a nation. Now since all contradiction to this question depends wholly upon these two grounds; the negative argument in matter of fact, and the pretences, that faith and repentance are required to baptism: since the first is wholly nothing; and infirm upon an infinite account, and the second may conclude, that infants can no more be saved than be baptized; because faith is more necessary to salvation than to baptism; it being said, *he that believeth not shall be damned;* and it is not said, *he that believeth not shall be excluded from baptism;* it

follows, that the doctrine of those that refuse to baptize their infants is upon both its legs weak and broken, and insufficient..

Upon the supposition of these grounds, the baptism of infants, according to the perpetual practise of the church of God, will stand firm and unshaken upon its own base. For, as the eunuch said to Philip, *What hinders them to be baptized?* If they can receive benefit by it, it is infallibly certain, that it belongs to them also to receive it, and to their parents to procure it: for nothing can deprive us of so great a grace, but an unworthiness or a disability. They are not disabled to receive it, if they need it, and if it does them good; and they have neither done good nor evil, and therefore they have not forfeited their right to it. This therefore shall be the first great argument or combination of inducements; ‘Infants receive many benefits by the susception of baptism, and therefore in charity and in duty we are to bring them to baptism.’

1. The first effect of baptism is, that in it we are admitted to the kingdom of Christ, offered and presented unto him. In which certainly there is the same act of worship to God, and the same blessing to the children of Christians, as there was in presenting the first-born among the Jews. For our children can be God’s own portion, as well as their’s; and as they presented the first-born to God, and so acknowledged that God might have taken his life in sacrifice, as well as the sacrifice of the lamb, or the oblation of a beast: yet when the right was confessed, God gave him back again, and took a lamb in exchange; or a pair of doves: So are our children presented to God as forfeit; and God might take the forfeiture, and not admit the babe to the promises of grace; but when the presentation of the child, and our acknowledgement, is made to God, God takes the lamb of the world in exchange, and he hath paid our forfeiture, and the children are holy unto the Lord. And what

hinders here? Cannot a cripple receive an alms at the beautiful gate of the temple, unless he go thither himself? Or cannot a gift be presented to God by the hands of the owners, and the gift become holy and pleasing to God without its own consent? The parents have a portion of the possession: Children are blessings, and God's gifts, and the father's greatest wealth, and therefore are to be given again to him. In other things we give something to God of all that he gives us; all we do not, because our needs force us to retain the greater part, and the less sanctifies the whole: but our children must all be returned to God; for we may love them, and so may God too, and they are the better our own, by being made holy in their presentation: whatsoever is given to God is holy, every thing in its proportion and capacity; a lamb is holy, when it becomes a sacrifice; and a table is holy, when it becomes an altar; and a house is holy, when it becomes a church; and a man is holy, when he is consecrated to be a priest; and so is every one that is dedicated to religion: these are holy persons, the others are holy things; and infants are between both: they have the sanctification that belongs to them, the holiness that can be of a reasonable nature, offered and destined to God's service; but not in that degree that is in an understanding, choosing person. Certain it is, that infants may be given to God; and if they may be, they must be: for it is not here as in goods, where we are permitted to use all or some, and give what portion we please out of them; but we cannot do our duty towards our children, unless we give them wholly to God, and offer them to his service and to his grace. The first does honour to God, the second does charity to the children. The effects and real advantages will appear in the sequel: in the mean time this argument extends thus far, that children may be presented to God acceptably, in order to his service. And it was highly preceptive, when our blessed Saviour commanded, that we should *suffer*

*little children to come to him*: and when they came, they carried away a blessing along with them. He was desirous they should partake of his merits; he is not willing, neither is it *his Father's will, that any of these little ones should perish*. And therefore he died for them, and loved, and blessed them: and so he will now, if they be brought to him, and presented as candidates of the religion and of the resurrection. Christ hath a blessing for our children, but let them come to him, that is, be presented at the doors of the church, to the sacrament of adoption and initiation; for I know no other way for them to come.

2. Children may be adopted into the covenant of the gospel, that is, *made partakers of the communion of saints*, which is the second effect of baptism; parts of the church, members of Christ's mystical body, and put into the order of eternal life. Now concerning this, it is certain, the church clearly hath power to do her offices in order to it. The faithful can pray for all men, they can do their piety to some persons with more regard and greater earnestness: they can admit whom they please in their proper dispositions, to a participation of all their holy prayers, and communions, and preachings, and exhortations: and if all this be a blessing, and all this be the actions of our own charity, who can hinder the church of God from admitting infants to the communion of all their pious offices, which can do them benefit in their present capacity? How this does necessarily infer baptism, I shall afterwards discourse\*. But for the present I enumerate, that the blessings of baptism are communicable to them; they may be admitted into a fellowship of all the prayers and privileges of the church, and the communion of saints, in blessings, and prayers, and holy offices. But that which is of greatest persuasion and convincing efficacy in this particular, is, that the children of the church are as capable of the

\* Sect. 25, &c.



same covenant, as the children of the Jews: But it was the same covenant that circumcision did consign, a spiritual covenant under a veil, and now it is the same spiritual covenant without the veil, which is evident to him that considers it; thus:

The words of the covenant are these [<sup>a</sup> “ I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect; I will multiply thee exceedingly. Thou shalt be a father of many nations: thy name shall not be Abram, but Abraham. Nations and kings shall be out of thee. I will be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee; and I will give all the land of Canaan to thy seed, and all the males shall be circumcised, and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and thee: and he that is not circumcised, shall be cut off from his people.”] The covenant which was on Abraham’s part was, *to walk before God, and to be perfect*: on God’s part to bless him with a numerous issue, and them with the land of Canaan; and the sign was circumcision, the token of the covenant. Now in all this, here was no duty to which the posterity was obliged, nor any blessing which Abraham could perceive or feel, because neither he nor his posterity did enjoy the promise for many hundred years after the covenant: and therefore as there was a duty for the posterity which is not here expressed; so there was a blessing for Abraham, which was concealed under the leaves of a temporal promise, and which we shall better understand from them whom the spirit of God hath taught the mysteriousness of this transaction. The argument indeed and the observation is wholly St. Paul’s, <sup>b</sup> *Abraham and the patriarchs died in faith not having received the promises*, viz. of a possession in Canaan. <sup>c</sup> *They saw the promises afar off*, they embraced them, and looked through the cloud, and the temporal veil, this was not it; they might have returned to Canaan, if that had

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 17. 2, &c.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. 11. 13.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. 11. 14.

been the object of their desires, and the design of the promise: but they desired, and <sup>a</sup> *did seek a country*, but it was a better, and that a heavenly. This was the object of their desire, and the end of their search, and the reward of their faith, and the secret of their promise. And therefore <sup>b</sup> *circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of faith, which he had before his circumcision*, before the making this covenant; and therefore it must principally relate to an effect and a blessing, greater than was afterwards expressed in the temporal promise: which effect was <sup>c</sup> *forgiveness of sins, a not imputing to us our infirmities, justification by faith, accounting that for righteousness*: and these effects or graces were promised to Abraham, not only for his posterity <sup>d</sup> *after the flesh*, but his children *after the spirit*, even to all that shall believe and walk in the steps of our father Abraham, which he walked in, being yet uncircumcised.

This was no other but the covenant of the gospel, though afterwards otherwise consigned: for so the apostle expressly affirms, that Abraham was the father of circumcision, (viz. by virtue of his covenant, *not only to them that are circumcised, but to all that believe: for this promise was not through the law of works, or of circumcision, but of faith.* And therefore as St. Paul observes, <sup>e</sup> *God promised that Abraham should be a father (not of that nation only,) but, of many nations, and the heir of the world;* <sup>f</sup> *that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ*; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. And, <sup>g</sup> *if ye be Christ's, then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* Since then the covenant of the gospel, is the covenant of faith, and not of works; and the promises are spiritual, not secular; and Abraham the father of the faithful Gentiles, as well as

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 11. 15.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. 4. 11.

<sup>c</sup> Rom. 4. 7.

<sup>d</sup> Rom. 4. 12.

<sup>e</sup> Rom. 4. 11, 12.

<sup>f</sup> Rom. 4. 17.

<sup>g</sup> Rom. 4. 13.

<sup>h</sup> Gal. 3. 14, 29.

the *circumcised Jews*, and the *heir of the world*, not by himself, but by his seed, or the son of man, our Lord Jesus: it follows, that the promises which circumcision did seal, were the same promises which are consigned in baptism; the covenant is the same, only that God's people are not impaled in Palestine, and the veil is taken away, and the temporal is passed into spiritual, and the result will be this, "That to as many persons, and in as many capacities, and in the same dispositions as the promises were applied, and did relate in circumcision, to the same they do belong, and may be applied in baptism." And let it be remembered, that the covenant which circumcision did sign, was a covenant of grace and faith; the promises were of the spirit, or spiritual, it was made before the law, and could not be rescinded by the legal covenant. *Nothing could be added to it, or taken from it*; and *we that are partakers of this grace*, are therefore partakers of it by being Christ's servants, united to Christ, and so are become Abraham's seed, (as the apostle at large and professedly proves in divers places, but especially in the fourth of the Romans, and the third to the Galatians.) And therefore if infants were then admitted to it, and consigned to it by a sacrament which they understood not any more than ours do, there is not any reason why ours should not enter in at the ordinary gate and door of grace as well as they. Their children were circumcised the eighth day, but were instructed afterwards, when they could enquire what these things meant. Indeed their proselytes were first taught, then circumcised; so are ours, baptized: but their infants were consigned first, and so must ours.

3. In baptism we are born again; and this infants need in the present circumstances, and for the same

<sup>a</sup> Οἱ τῦτοι ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ἦσαν, ἡ δὲ ἀλήθεια ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἡ περιτομὴ σαρκικὴ ὑπερῆλθον χρόνῳ, ἕως τῆς μεγάλης περιτομῆς, τυτίει τῷ βαπτισμῷ· τῷ περιτέμνοντι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ ἁμαρτημάτων καὶ σφραγισαί· ἡμᾶς εἰς ὄνομα Θεοῦ, Epiphani. l. 1. heres. 8. scil. Epicuræor.

great reason, that men of age and reason do. For our natural birth is either of itself insufficient, or is made so by the fall of Adam, and the consequent evils, that nature alone, or our first birth, cannot bring us to heaven, which is a supernatural end, that is, an end above all the power of our nature as now it is. So that if nature cannot bring us to heaven, grace must, or we can never get thither; if the first birth cannot, a second must: but the second birth spoken of in scripture, is baptism, *\* a man must be born of water and the spirit*. And therefore baptism is λῆτρον παλιγγενεσίας, the laver of a new birth. Either then infants cannot go to heaven any way that we know of, or they must be baptized. To say they are to be left to God, is an excuse, and no answer: for when God hath opened the door, and calls that the entrance into heaven, we do not leave them to God, when we will not carry them to him in the way which he hath described, and at the door which himself hath opened: we leave them indeed, but it is but helpless and destitute: and though God is better than man, yet that is no warrant to us, what it will be to the children, that we cannot warrant, or conjecture. And if it be objected, that to the new birth is required dispositions of our own, which are to be wrought by and in them that have the use of reason: besides that this is wholly against the analogy of a new birth, in which the person to be born is wholly a passive, and hath put into him the principle that in time will produce its proper actions: It is certain, that they that can receive the new birth, are capable of it; the effect of it is a possibility of being saved, and arriving to a supernatural felicity. If infants can receive this effect, then also the new birth, without which they cannot receive the effect. And if they can receive salvation, the effect of the new birth, what hinders them, but they may receive that that is in order to that effect, and ordained

\* Tit. 3. 5.

only for it; and which is nothing of itself, but in its institution and relation, and which may be received by the same capacity in which one may be created, that is, a passivity, or a capacity obediential.

4. Concerning pardon of sins, which is one great effect of baptism, it is certain, that infants have not that benefit which men of sin and age may receive. He that hath a sickly stomach drinks wine, and it not only refreshes his spirits, but cures his stomach. He that drinks wine and hath not that disease, receives good by his wine, though it does not minister to so many needs; it refreshes him, though it does not cure him: and when oil is poured upon a man's head, it does not always heal a wound, but sometimes makes him a cheerful countenance, sometimes it consigns him to be a King or a priest. So it is in baptism: it does not heal the wounds of actual sins, because they have not committed them; but it takes off the evil of original sin: <sup>a</sup> whatsoever is imputed to us by Adam's prevarication, is washed off by the death of the second Adam, into which we are baptized. But concerning original sin, because there are so many disputes which may intricate the question, I shall make use only of that which is confessed on both sides, and material to our purpose. Death came upon all men by Adam's sin, and the necessity of it remains upon us, as an evil consequent of the disobedience. For though death is natural yet it was kept off from man by God's favour, which when he lost, the banks were broken, and the water reverted to its natural course, and our nature became a curse, and death a punishment. <sup>b</sup> Now that this also relates to infants so far, is certain, because they are sick, and die. This the Pelagians denied not. But to whomsoever this evil descended, for them also a remedy is provided by the second Adam, *That as in Adam all die, even so in*

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 5. 17, 18.

<sup>b</sup> Vide August. l. 4. contra duas epistolas Pelag. c. 4. l. 6. contr. Jur. t. 4.

*Christ shall all be made alive*; that is, at the day of judgement: then death shall be destroyed. In the mean time, death hath a sting and a bitterness, a curse it is, and an express of the divine anger: and if this sting be not taken away here, we shall have no participation of the final victory over death. Either therefore infants must be for ever without remedy in this evil consequent of their father's sin, or they must be adopted into the participation of Christ's death, which is the remedy. Now how can they partake of Christ's death, but by baptism into his death? For if there be any spiritual way fancied, it will by a stronger argument admit them to baptism: for if they can receive spiritual effects, they can also receive the outward sacrament; this being denied only upon pretence they cannot have the other. If there be no spiritual way extraordinary, then the ordinary way is only left for them. If there be an extraordinary, let it be shewn, and Christians will be at rest concerning their children. One thing only I desire to be observed, that Pelagius denied original sin, but yet denied not the necessity of infant's baptism; and being accused of it in an epistle to Pope Innocent the first, he purged himself of the suspicion, and allowed the practice, but denied the inducement of it: which shews, that their arts are weak that think baptism to be useless to infants, if they be not formally guilty of the prevarication of Adam: By which I also gather, that it was so universal, so primitive a practice, to baptize infants, that it was greater than all pretences to the contrary: for it would much have conduced to the introducing his opinion against grace and original sin, if he had destroyed that practice which seemed so very much to have its greatest necessity from the doctrine he denied. But against Pelagius, and against all that follow the parts of his opinion, it is of good use which St. Austin, Prosper, and Fulgentius argue; if infants are punished for Adam's sin, then they are also

guilty of it in some sense. \* *Nimis enim impium est hoc de Dei sentire justitiâ, quòd à prævaricatione liberos cum reis voluerit esse damnatos.* So Prosper. *Dispendia quæ flentes nascendo testantur, dicito quo merito sub justissimo et omnipotentissimo judice eis, si nullum peccatum attrahant, arrogantur;* said St. Austin. For the guilt of sin signifies nothing but the obligation to the punishment: and he that feels the evil consequent, to him the sin is imputed; not as to all the same dishonour, or moral accounts, but to the more material, to the natural account; and in holy scripture the taking off the punishment, is the pardon of the sin: and in the same degree the punishment is abolished, in the same God is appeased, and then the person stands upright, being reconciled to God by his grace. Since therefore infants have the punishment of sin, it is certain the sin is imputed to them; and therefore they need being reconciled to God by Christ: and if so, then, when they are baptized into Christ's death, and into his resurrection, their sins are pardoned, because the punishment is taken off, the sting of natural death is taken away, because God's anger is removed, and they shall partake of Christ's resurrection: which because baptism does signify and consign, they also are to be baptized. To which also add this appendant consideration, that whatsoever the sacraments do consign, that they also do convey and minister: they do it, that is, God by them does it; lest we should think the sacraments to be mere illusions, and abusing us by deceitful ineffective signs: and therefore to infants the grace of a title to a resurrection, and reconciliation to God by the death of Christ is conveyed, because it signifies and consigns this to them more to the life and analogy of resemblance, than circumcision to the infant sons of Israel. I end this consideration with the words of Nazianzen, <sup>b</sup> *ἡ γέννησις ἐκ βαπτισματος πᾶν ἀπὸ γενέσεως κάλυμμα περιτέμνει, καὶ πρὸς τὴν αἰών*

\* Prosper, contra Collatorem. cap. 20.

<sup>b</sup> Orat. 40, in Baptis.

ζῶνι ἐπαράγει. Our birth by baptism does cut off every unclean appendage of our natural birth, and leads us to a celestial life: and this in children is therefore more necessary, because the evil came upon them without their own act of reason and choice, and therefore the grace and remedy ought not to stay the leisure of dull nature, and the formalities of the civil law.

5. The baptism of infants does to them the greatest part of that benefit which belongs to the remission of sins. For baptism is a state of repentance and pardon for ever. This I suppose to be clearly proved, to which I only add this caution, that the Pelagians, to undervalue the necessity of supervening grace, affirmed, that baptism did minister to us grace sufficient to live perfectly, and without sin for ever. Against this St. Jerome sharply declaims and affirms, \* *Baptismum præterita donare peccata, non futuram servare justitiam: that is, non statim justum facit et omni plenum justitiâ,* as he expounds his meaning in another place. *Vetera peccata conscindit, novas virtutes non tribuit; dimittit à carcere, et dimisso, si laboraverit, præmia pollicetur.* Baptism doth not so forgive future sins, that we may do what we please, or so as we need not labour and watch, and fear perpetually, and make use of God's grace to actuate our endeavours, but puts us into a state of pardon, that is, in a covenant of grace, in which so long as we labour and repent, and strive to do our duty, so long our infirmities are pitied, and our sins certain to be pardoned upon their certain conditions; that is, by virtue of it we are capable of pardon, and must work for it, and may hope it. And therefore infants have a most certain capacity and proper disposition to baptism: for sin creeps before it can go, and little indecencies are soon learned, and malice is before their years, and they can do mischief and irregularities betimes; and though we know not

\* Lib. 3. adv. Pelag. 6. lib. 1. in initio.



when, nor how far they are imputed in every month of their lives, yet it is an admirable art of the spirit of grace, to put them into a state of pardon, that their remedy may at least be as soon as their necessity. And therefore Tertullian and Gregory Nazianzen advised the baptism of children to be at three or four years of age; meaning that they then begin to have little inadvertencies and hasty follies, and actions so evil as did need a lavatory. But if baptism hath an influence upon sins in the succeeding portions of our life, then it is certain, that their being presently innocent, does not hinder, and ought not to retard the sacrament; and therefore Tertullian's '*Quid festinat innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum? what need innocents hasten to the remission of sins?*' is soon answered. It is true they need not in respect of any actual sins, for so they are innocent: but in respect of the evils of their nature, derived from their original, and in respect of future sins in the whole state of their life, it is necessary they be put into a state of pardon before they sin, because some sin early, some sin later; and therefore unless they be baptized so early as to prevent the first sins, they may chance die in a sin, to the pardon of which they have yet derived no title from Christ.

6. The next great effect of baptism which children can have, is the spirit of sanctification, and if they can be baptized with water and the spirit, it will be sacrilege to rob them of so holy treasures. And concerning this, although it be with them, as St. Paul says of heirs, *The heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all*; and children although they receive the spirit of promise, and the spirit of grace, yet in respect of actual exercise, they differ not from them that have them not at all, yet this hinders not but they may have them. For as the reasonable soul and all its faculties are in chil-

\* Lib. de Baptis. c. 18.

dren, will and understanding, passions and powers of attraction and propulsion, yet these faculties do not operate or come abroad till time and art, observation and experience have drawn them forth into action: so may the spirit of grace, the principle of christian life, be infused, and yet lie without action till in its own day it is drawn forth. For in every christian there are three parts concurring to his integral constitution, body, and soul, and spirit; and all these have their proper activities and times, but every one in his own order, first that which is natural, then that which is spiritual. And, as Aristotle said, "A man, first lives the life of a plant, then of a beast, and lastly of a man," is true in this sense: and the more spiritual the principle is, the longer it is before it operates because more things concur to spiritual actions than to natural: and these are necessary, and therefore first; the other are perfect, and therefore last. And who is he that so well understands the philosophy of this third principle of a christian's life, the Spirit, as to know how or when it is infused, and how it operates in all its periods, and what it is in its being and proper nature; and whether it be like the soul, or like the faculty, or like a habit, or how or to what purposes God in all varieties does dispense it? These are secrets which none but bold people use to decree, and build propositions upon their own dreams. That which is certain is, That the Spirit is the principle of a new life, or a new birth. That baptism is the laver of this new birth. That it is the seed of God, and may lie long in the furrows before it springs up. That from the faculty to the act, the passage is not always sudden and quick. That the Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, that is, of resurrection to eternal life: which inheritance because children we hope shall have, they cannot be denied to have its seal and earnest; that is, if they shall have all, they are not to be denied a part. That children have some effects of the spirit, and therefore do receive it, and

are baptized with the Spirit, and therefore may with water: which thing is therefore true and evident, because some children are sanctified, as Jeremy and the Baptist, and therefore all may. And because all signification of persons in an effect of the Holy Ghost, there is no peradventure but they that can be sanctified by God, can in that capacity receive the Holy Ghost: and all the ground of dissenting here, is only upon a mistake, because infants do no act of holiness, they suppose them incapable of the grace of sanctification. Now sanctification of children, is their adoption to the inheritance of sons, their presentation to Christ, their consignation to Christ's service, and to resurrection, their being put into a possibility of being saved, their restitution to God's favour, which naturally, that is, as our nature is depraved and punished, they could not have. And in short the case is this:<sup>a</sup> original righteousness was in Adam after the manner of nature, but it was an act or effect of grace, and by it men were not made, but born righteous; the inferior faculties obeyed the superior, the mind was whole and right, and conformable to the divine image, the reason and the will always concurring, the will followed reason, and reason followed the laws of God, and so long as a man had not lost this, he was pleasing to God, and should have passed to a more perfect state. Now because this, if Adam had stood, should have been born with every child, there was in infants a principle which was the seed of holy life here, and a blessed hereafter; and yet the children should have gone in the road of nature, then as well as now, and the Spirit should have operated at nature's leisure; God being the giver of both, would have made them instrumental to, and perfective of each other, but not destructive. \* Now what was lost by Adam is re-

<sup>a</sup> Τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀρχῇθεν ἀπὸ τῶν θείων ἀγαθῶν ἀνοήτως ἐξαλειφθήσασαν ἢ πολυπραγματοῦς ζωῇ διαδέχεται ἢ τῷ φθοροποιῷ θανάτῳ πύρας. *Dionys. Areop. eccles. Hier. cap. 3. Part 3.*

<sup>b</sup> Ut quod perdideramus in Adam, i. e. secundum imaginem & similitudinem esse Dei, hoc in Jesu Christo reciperemus. *Irenæus lib. 3. c. 30.*

stored by Christ, the same righteousness, only it is not born, but superinduced, not integral, but interrupted, but such as it is, there is no difference, but the same or the like principle may be derived to us from Christ, as there should have been from Adam, that is, a principle of obedience, a regularity of faculties, a beauty in the soul, and a state of acceptation with God. And we see also in men of understanding and reason, *the Spirit of God dwells in them*, (which Tatianus describing, uses these words,—*ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ὡς περ ἑνυσμα τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτῆς [πνεύματος] κεκλιμένη*, The soul is possessed with sparks, or materials of the power of the Spirit) and yet it is sometimes ineffective and unactive, sometimes more, sometimes less, and does no more do its work at all times, than the soul does at all times understand. Add to this, that if there be in infants naturally an evil principle, a proclivity to sin, an ignorance and pravity of mind, a disorder of affections (as experience teaches us there is, and the perpetual doctrine of the church, and the universal mischiefs issuing from mankind, and the sin of every man does witness too much) why cannot infants have a good principle in them, though it works not till its own season, as well as an evil principle? If there were not by nature some evil principle, it is not possible that all the world should choose sin. In free agents it was never heard that all individuals loved and chose the same thing, to which they were not naturally inclined. Neither do all men choose to marry, neither do all choose to abstain, and in this instance there is a natural inclination to one part; but of all the men and women in the world, there is no one that hath never sinned. <sup>a</sup> *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*, said an apostle. If therefore nature hath in infants an evil principle, which operates when the child can choose, but is all the while within the soul; either infants have by grace a

<sup>a</sup> 1 John 1. 8.

principle put into them, or else sin abounds where grace does not superabound, expressly against the doctrine of the apostle. The event of this discourse is, that if infants be capable of the Spirit of grace, there is no reason but they may and ought to be baptized, as well as men and women; unless God had expressly forbidden them, which cannot be pretended: and that infants are capable of the Spirit of, I think is made very credible. *Christus infantibus infans factus sanctificans infantes*, said Irenæus: <sup>a</sup> Christ became an infant among the infants, and does sanctify infants: and St. Cyprian affirms, *Esse apud omnes sive infantes sive majores natu unam divini muneris equitatem*, There is the same dispensation of the divine grace to all alike, to infants as well as to men. And in this royal priesthood, as it is in the secular, kings may be anointed in their cradles, <sup>b</sup> *Dat (Deus) sui Spiritus occultissimam gratiam, quam etiam latentèr infundit in parvulis*, God gives the most secret grace of his Spirit, which he also secretly infuses into infants. And if a secret infusion be rejected, because it cannot be proved at the place and at the instant, many men that hope for heaven will be very much to seek for a proof of their earnest; and need an earnest of the earnest. For all that have the spirit of God cannot in all instants prove it, or certainly know it; neither is it defined by how many *indices* the Spirit's presence can be proved or signified. And they limit the Spirit too much, and understand it too little, who take accounts of his secret workings, and measure them by the material lines and methods of natural and animal effects. And yet because whatsoever is holy, is made so by the Holy Spirit, we are certain that the children of believing, that is, of christian parents, are holy. St. Paul affirmed it, and by it hath distinguished ours from the children of unbelievers, and our marriages from theirs; and because the children of the

<sup>a</sup> Ep. ad Fiden. lib. 3. ep. 8.

<sup>b</sup> S. Aug. lib. de pec. Mer. & remiss. c. 9.

heathen when they come to choice and reason, may enter to baptism and the covenant if they will, our children have no privilege beyond the children of Turks or heathens, unless it be in the present capacity, that is, either by receiving the Holy Ghost immediately, and the promises, or at least having a title to the sacrament, and entering by that door. If they have the Spirit, nothing can hinder them from a title to the water; and if they have only a title to the water of the sacrament, then they shall receive the promise of the Holy Spirit, the benefits of the sacrament: else their privilege is none at all but a dish of cold water, which every village nurse can provide for her new born babe.

But it is in our case as it was with the Jews children, our children are a holy seed; for if it were not so with christianity, how could St. Peter move the Jews to christianity by telling them *the promise was to them and their children*? For if our children be not capable of the spirit of promise and holiness, and yet their children were holy, it had been a better argument to have kept them in the synagogue, than to have called them to the christian church. Either therefore, first, there is some holiness in a reasonable nature, which is not from the spirit of holiness; or else, secondly, our children do receive the Holy Spirit, because they are holy; or if they be not holy they are in worse condition under Christ than under Moses: or if none of all this be true, then our children are holy by having received the Holy Spirit of promise, and consequently nothing can hinder them from being baptized.

And indeed if the christian Jew, whose children are circumcised, and made partakers of the same promises and title, and inheritance and sacraments, which themselves had at their conversion to the faith of Christ, had seen their children now shut out from these new sacraments, it is not to be doubted but they would have raised a storm, greater than could easily have been suppressed; since about their circumci-

sions they had raised such tragedies and implacable disputations: and there had been great reason to look for a storm; for their children were circumcised, and if not baptized, then they were left under a burthen which their fathers were quit of, for St. Paul said unto you, *Whosoever is circumcised, is a debtor to keep the whole law.* These children therefore that were circumcised, stood obliged for want of baptism to perform the laws of ceremonies, to be presented into the Temple, to pay their price, to be redeemed with silver and gold; to be bound by the law of pollutions and carnal ordinances: and therefore if they had been thus left it would be no wonder if the Jews had complained and made a tumult: they used to do it for less matters.

To which let this be added, that the first book of the New Testament was not written till eight years after Christ's Ascension, and St. Mark's gospel twelve years. In the mean time, to what scriptures did they appeal? by the analogy or proportion of what writings did they end their questions? whence did they prove their articles? they only appealed to the Old Testament, and only added what their Lord super-added. Now either it must be said that our blessed Lord commanded that infants should not be baptized, which is no where pretended; and if it were, cannot at all be proved: or if by the proportion of scriptures they did serve God, and preach the religion, it is plain that by the analogy of the Old Testament, that is, of those scriptures by which they proved Christ to be come, and to have suffered, they also approved the baptism of infants, or the admitting them to the society of the faithful Jews, of which also the church did then principally consist.

7. That baptism (which consigns men and women to a blessed resurrection), doth also equally consign infants to it, hath nothing, that I know of, pretended against it, there being the same signature and the same grace, and in this thing all being alike passive, and

we no way co-operating to the consignation and promise of grace: and infants have an equal necessity, as being liable to sickness and groaning with as sad accents, and dying sooner than men and women, and less able to complain, and more apt to be pitied and broken with the unhappy consequents of a short life, and a speedy death, & *infelicitate priscorum hominum*, with the infelicity and folly of their first parents; and therefore have as great need as any, and that is capacity enough to receive a remedy for the evil which was brought upon them by the fault of another.

8. And after all this, if baptism be that means which God hath appointed to save us, it were well if we would do our parts towards infants final interest: which whether it depends upon the sacrament and its proper grace, we have nothing to rely upon but those texts of scripture which make baptism the ordinary way of entering into the state of salvation: save only we are to add this, that because of this law infants are not personally capable, but the church for them, as for all other indefinitely, we have reason to believe, that their friends neglect shall by some way be supplied; but hope hath in it nothing beyond a probability. This we may be certain of, that naturally we cannot be heirs of salvation, for *by nature we are children of wrath*, and therefore an eternal separation from God, is an infallible consequent to our evil nature; either therefore children must be put into the state of grace, or they shall dwell for ever where God's face does never shine. Now there are but two ways of being put into the state of grace and salvation; the inward by the spirit, and the outward by water, which regularly are together. If they be renewed by the spirit, what hinders them to be baptized who receive the Holy Ghost as well as we? If they are not capable of the spirit, they are capable of water; and if of neither, where is their title to heaven, which is neither internal nor external, neither spiritual nor sacramental, neither secret nor manifest, neither na-



tural nor gracious, neither original nor derivative? And well may we lament the death of poor babes that are *ἄβαπτοι*, concerning whom if we neglect what is regularly prescribed to all that enter heaven, without any difference expressed, or case reserved, <sup>a</sup> we have no reason to be comforted over our dead children, but may weep as they that have no hope. We may hope when our neglect was not the hinderance, because God hath wholly taken the matter into his own hand, and then it cannot miscarry; and though we know nothing of the children, yet we know much of God's goodness. But when God hath permitted it to us, that is, offered and permitted children to our ministry, whatever happens to the innocents, we may well fear lest God will require the souls at our hands: and we cannot be otherwise secure, but that it will be said concerning our children, which St. Ambrose used in a case like this, <sup>b</sup> *Anima illa potuit salva fieri, si habuisset purgationem*, This soul might have gone to God, if it had been purified and washed. We know God is good, infinitely good, but we know it is not at all good to tempt his goodness: and he tempts him that leaves the usual way, and pretends it is not made for him, and yet hopes to be at his journey's end, or expects to meet his child in heaven, when himself shuts the door against him, which for aught he knows is the only one that stands open. St. Austin was severe in this question against unbaptized infants, therefore he is called *duras Pater Infantium*: though I know not why the original of that opinion should be attributed to him, since St. Ambrose said the same before him, as appears in his words quoted in the note.

And now that I have enumerated the blessings which are consequent to baptism, and have also made apparent, that infants can receive these blessings, I

<sup>a</sup> Nisi qui renatus fuerit &c. utique nullum excipit, non infantem, non aliqua præventum necessitate. *Ambr. de Abrah. patr. lib. 2. c. 11.*

<sup>b</sup> Lib. 2 c. 11. de Abrah. patriarcæ

suppose I need not use any other persuasions to bring children to baptism. If it be certain they may receive these good things by it, it is certain they are not to be hindered of them without the greatest impiety, and sacrilege, and uncharitableness in the world. Nay, if it be only probable that they receive these blessings, or if it be but possible they may, nay unless it be impossible they should, and so declared by revelation or demonstratively certain, it were intolerable unkindness and injustice to our pretty innocents, to let their crying be unpitied, and their natural misery eternally irremediable, and their sorrows without remedy, and their souls no more capable of relief, than their bodies of physic, and their death left with the sting in, and their souls without spirits to go to God, and no angel guardian to be assigned them in the assemblies of the faithful, and they not to be reckoned in the accounts of God and God's church. All these are sad stories.

There are in scripture very many other probabilities, to persuade the baptism of infants, but because the places admit of divers interpretations, the arguments have so many diminutions, and the certainty that is in them is too fine for easy understandings, I have chosen to build the ancient doctrines upon such principles which are more easy and certain, and have not yet been sullied and rifled with the contentions of an adversary. This only I shall observe, that the words of our blessed Lord [*Unless a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.*] cannot be expounded to the exclusion of children, but the same expositions will also make baptism not necessary for men: for if they be both necessary ingredients, water and the spirit, then let us provide water, and God will provide the spirit; if we bring wood to the sacrifice, he will provide a lamb. And if they signify distinctly, one is ordinarily as necessary as the other, and then infants must be baptized, or not be saved. But if one be exegetical and

explicative of the other, and by water and the spirit is meant only the purification of the spirit, then where is the necessity of baptism for men? It will be as the other sacrament, at most but highly convenient, not simply necessary, and all the other places will easily be answered, if this be avoided. But however, these words being spoken in so decretory a manner, are to be used with fear and reverence; and we must be infallibly sure by some certain infallible arguments, that infants ought not to be baptized, or we ought to fear concerning the effect of these decretory words, I shall only add two things by way of corollary to, this discourse.

That the church of God ever since her numbers are full, have for very many ages consisted almost wholly of assemblies of them who have been baptized in their infancy: and although in the first callings of the Gentiles, the chiefest and most frequent baptisms were of converted and repenting persons and believers, yet from the beginning also the church hath baptized the infants of Christian parents; according to the prophecy of Isaiah, *Behold, I will lift up my hands to the Gentiles, and set up a standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.* Concerning which, I shall not only bring the testimonies of the matter of fact, but either a report of an apostolical tradition, or some argument from the fathers, which will make their testimony more effectual in all that shall relate to the question.

The author of the book of ecclesiastical hierarchy, attributed to St. Denis the Areopagite, takes notice, that certain unholy persons and enemies to the Christian religion, think it a ridiculous thing that infants, who as yet cannot understand the divine mysteries, should be partakers of the sacraments; and that professions and abrenunciations should be made by others for

them and in their names. He answers, that holy men, governors of churches, have so taught, having received a tradition from their fathers and elders in Christ: by which answer of his, as it appears, that he himself was later than the Areopagite; so it is so early by him affirmed, that even then there was an ancient tradition for the baptism of infants, and the use of godfathers in the ministry of the sacrament. Concerning which, it having been so ancient a constitution of the church, it were well if men would rather humbly and modestly observe, than like scorers deride it, in which they shew their own folly as well as immodesty. For what undecency or incongruity is it, that our parents, natural or spiritual, should stipulate for us, when it is agreeable to the practise of all the laws and transactions of the world, an effect of the communion of saints and of Christian economy? For why may not infants be stipulated for as well as we? all were included in the stipulation made with Adam; he made a losing bargain for himself, and we smarted for his folly: and if the faults of parents, and Kings, and relatives, do bring evil upon their children, and subjects, and correlatives, it is but equal that our children may have benefit also by our charity and piety. But concerning making an agreement for them, we find that God was confident concerning Abraham, that he would teach his children: and there is no doubt but parents have great power, by strict education and prudent discipline, to efform the minds of their children to virtue. Joshua did expressly undertake for his household, *I and my house will serve the Lord*: and for children we may better do it, because till they are of perfect choice, no government in the world is so great, as that of parents over their children, in that which can concern the parts of this question: for they rule over their understandings, and children know nothing but what they are told, and they believe it infinitely: and it is a rare art of the spirit, to engage parents to bring them up well *in the nurture*

and admonition of the Lord; they are persons obliged by a superinduced band, they are to give them instructions and holy principles, as they give them meat; and it is certain that parents may better stipulate for their children, than the church can for men and women; for they may be present impostors and hypocrites, as the church story tells of some, and consequently are *παρεβαντίσαι*, not really converted, and ineffectively baptized: and the next day they may change their resolution, and grow weary of their vow: and that is the most that children can do when they come to age: and it is very much in the parents, whether the children shall do any such thing or no;

—purus et insons

[*Ut me collaudem*] *si et vivo carus amicis,*

*Causa fuit Pater his—*

*Ipsæ mihi custos incorruptissimæ omnes*

*Circum doctores aderat; quid multa? pudicum*

*(Qui primus virtutis honos) servavit ab omni*

*Non solum facto, verum opprobrio quoque turpi:*

—ob hoc nunc

*Læus illi debetur, et à me gratia major.*

HORAT.

For education can introduce a habit and a second nature, against which children cannot kick, unless they do some violence to themselves and their inclinations. And although it fails too often whenever it fails, yet we pronounce prudently concerning future things, when we have a less influence into the event, than in the present case, (and therefore are more unapt persons to stipulate) and less reason in the thing itself (and therefore have not so much reason to be confident.) Is not the greatest prudence of generals instanced in their foreseeing future events, and guessing at the designs of their enemies, concerning which they have less reason to be confident, than parents of their children's belief of the Christian creed? To which I

add this consideration, that parents or godfathers may therefore safely and prudently promise, that their children shall be of the Christian faith, because we not only see millions of men and women who not only believe the whole creed only upon the stock of their education; but there are none that ever do renounce the faith of their country and breeding, unless they be violently tempted by interest or weakness, antecedent or consequent. He that sees all men almost to be Christians, because they are bid to be so, need not question the fittingness of godfathers promising in behalf of the children for whom they answer.

And however the matter be for godfathers, yet the tradition of baptizing infants passed through the hands of Irenæus, *“ Omnem ætatem sancificans per illam quæ ad ipsam erat similitudinem. Omnes n. venit per semetipsum salvare, omnes inquam qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, infantes, et parvulos, et pueros, et juvenes, et seniores.”* *Ideo per omnem venit ætatem, et infantibus infans factus sancificans infantes, in parvulis parvulus, &c.* *“<sup>b</sup> Christ did sanctify every age by his own susception of it, and similitude to it. For he came to save all men by himself, I say all who by him are born again unto God, infants, and children, and boys, and young men, and old men. He was made an infant to infants, sanctifying infants, a little one to the little ones, &c.”* And Origen is express, *Ecclesia traditionem ab apostolis suscepit etiam parvulis dare baptismum.* The church hath received a tradition from the apostles to give baptism to children. And St. Cyprian in his epistle to Fidus, gives account of this article: for being questioned by some less skilful persons, whether it were lawful to baptize children before the eighth day, he gives account of the whole question; and a whole council of sixty-six bishops upon very good reason decreed, that their baptism should

<sup>a</sup> L. 2. c. 39. <sup>b</sup> Vide etiam Constit. Clementis βαπτίζεις δι' ἑμῶν καὶ τὰ νεώτατα, καὶ ἐντρέφεις αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νομίμῳ δεῖν. Lib. 5. ad Rom. c. 6. idem homil. 14. in Lucam et lib. 8. hom. 8. in Levitic.

at no hand be deferred, though whether six, or eight, or ten days, was no matter, so there be no danger or present necessity. The whole epistle is worth the reading.

But besides these authorities of such who writ before the starting of the Pelagian questions, it will not be useless to bring their discourses, of them and others, I mean the reason upon which the church did it both before and after.

Irenæus his argument was this; <sup>a</sup> Christ took upon him our nature to sanctify and to save it; and passed through the several periods of it, even unto death; which is the symbol and effect of old age; and therefore it is certain he did sanctify all the periods of it: and why should he be an infant, but that infants should receive the crown of their age, the purification of their stained nature, the sanctification of their persons, and the saving of their souls by their infant Lord and elder brother?

<sup>b</sup> *Omnis enim anima eousque in Adam censetur donec in Christo recenseatur: tamdiu immunda quamdiu recenseatur.* Every soul is accounted in Adam till it be new accounted in Christ; and so long as it is accounted in Adam, so long it is unclean; and we know *no unclean thing can enter into heaven*; and therefore our Lord hath defined it, *Unless ye be born of water and the spirit, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven*: that is, ye cannot be holy. It was the argument of <sup>c</sup> Tertullian; which the rather is to be received, because he was one less favourable to the custom of the church, in his time of baptizing infants, which custom he noted and acknowledged, and hath also in the preceding discourse fairly proved. <sup>d</sup> And indeed (that St. Cyprian may superadd his symbol) "God, who is no excepter of persons will also be no excepter of ages. For if to the greatest delinquents sinning

<sup>a</sup> Irenæus.

<sup>b</sup> Tertullian.

<sup>c</sup> Lib. de anima, c. 39 et 4.

<sup>d</sup> St. Cyprian ep. ad Fidum.

long before against God remission of sins be given when afterwards they believe, and from baptism and grace no man is forbidden, how much more ought not an infant be forbidden, who being new born, hath sinned nothing, save only that being in the flesh, born of Adam in his first birth, he hath contracted the contagion of an old death. Who therefore comes the easier to obtain remission of sins, because to him are forgiven, not his own, but the sins of another man. None ought to be driven from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful, and gentle, and pious unto all; and therefore much less infants, who more deserve our aid, and more need the divine mercy, because in the first beginning of their birth crying and weeping, they can do nothing but call for mercy and relief. \* For this reason it was (saith Origen) that they to whom the secrets of the divine mysteries were committed, did baptize their infants, because there was born with them the impurities of sin," which did need material absolution as a sacrament of spiritual purification; for that it may appear that our sins have a proper analogy to this sacrament, *the body itself is called the body of sin*: and therefore the washing of the body is not ineffectual towards the great work of pardon and abolition. Indeed after this absolution there remains concupiscence, or the material part of our misery and sin: For Christ by his death only took away that which when he did die for us, he bore in his own body upon the tree. Now Christ only bore the punishment of our sin, and therefore we shall not die for it, but the material part of the sin Christ bore not. Sin could not come so near him; it might make him sick and die, but not disordered and stained. He was pure from original and actual sins; and therefore that remains in the body, though the guilt and punishment be taken off, and changed into advantages and grace; and the actual are received by the spirit of

\* Origen, lib. 5. ad Rom. c. 6.



grace descending afterwards upon the church, and sent by our Lord to the same purpose.

But it is not rationally to be answered what St. Ambrose says, *quia omnis peccato obnoxia, ideo omnis ætas sacramento idonea*: For it were strange that sin and misery should seize upon the innocent and most unconsenting persons; and that they only should be left without a sacrament, and an instrument of expiation. And although they cannot consent to the present susception, yet neither do they refuse; and yet they consent as much to the grace of the sacrament, as to the prevarication of Adam; and because they suffer under this, it were but reason they should be relieved by that. And <sup>b</sup> it were better (as Gregory Nazianzen affirms) that they should be consigned and sanctified without their own knowledge, than to die without their being sanctified; for so it happened to the circumcised babes of Israel: and if the conspersion and washing the door posts with the blood of a lamb, did sacramentally preserve all the first-born of Goshen, it cannot be thought impossible or unreasonable, that the want of understanding in children should hinder them from the blessing of a sacrament, and from being redeemed and washed with the blood of the Holy Lamb, who was slain for all from the beginning of the world.

After all this it is not inconsiderable that we say the church hath great power and authority about the sacraments, which is observable in many instances. She appointed what persons she pleased, and in equal power made an unequal dispensation and ministry. The apostles first dispensed all things, and then they left off exterior ministries to attend to the word of God and prayer: and St. Paul accounted it no part of his office to baptize, when he had been separated by imposition of hands at Antioch, to the work of preach-

<sup>a</sup> S. Ambros. de Abraham patriarch. l. 2. c. 11.  
ἀνακισθῆναι ἀγιασθῆναι, ἢ ἀπελθεῖν ἀσφράγισα καὶ ἀτίλειτα.

<sup>b</sup> S. Greg. Naz. κρείσσον γὰρ  
Orat. 40. in S. Baptis.

ing and greater ministries; and accounted that act of the church, the act of Christ, saying, *Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel*: they used various forms in the ministration of baptism, sometimes baptizing in the name of Christ, sometimes expressly invoking the holy and ever blessed Trinity: one while [*I baptize thee*] as in the Latin church, but in the Greek, [*Let the servant of Christ be baptized*:] and in all ecclesiastical ministries the church invented the forms, and in most things hath often changed them, as in absolution, excommunication: and sometimes they baptized people upon their profession of repentance, and then taught them; as it happened to the gaoler and all his family; in whose case there was no explicit faith afore-hand in the mysteries of religion, so far as appears; and yet he, and not only he, but all his house were baptized at that hour of the night when the earthquake was terrible, and the fear was pregnant upon them, and *this upon their master's account*, as it is likely: but others were baptized in the conditions of a previous faith, and a new begun repentance<sup>a</sup>. They baptized in rivers or in lavatories, by dipping or by sprinkling; for so we find that St. Laurence did as he went to martyrdom, and so the church did sometimes to clinicks, and so it is highly convenient to be done in northern countries according to the prophecy of Isaiah, *So shall he sprinkle many nations*, according as the typical expiations among the Jews were usual by sprinkling: and it is fairly relative to the mystery, to the *sprinkling with the blood of Christ*,<sup>d</sup> and the watering the furrows of our souls with the dew of heaven, to make them to bring forth fruit unto the spirit and unto holiness. <sup>e</sup> The church sometimes dipped the catechumen three times, sometimes but

<sup>a</sup> Non ut delinquere desinant sed quia desierunt, as Tertull. phraseth it.

<sup>b</sup> Isa. 52. 15.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Pet. 1. 2.

<sup>d</sup> Aqua refectionis et baptismi lavacrum quo anima sterilis ariditate peccati ad bonos fructus inferendos divinis muneribus irrigatur. Cassiodor. m. 23. ps. 2.

<sup>e</sup> ἵναι τὰ ὅτα τῶν σφραγισμένων κατασημαίνετο, dixit Heracleon apud Clem Alex.

once, some churches use fire in their baptisms, so do the Ethiopians, and the custom was ancient in some places. And so in the other sacrament; sometimes she stood and sometimes kneeled, and sometimes received it in the mouth, and sometimes in the hand: one while in leavened, another while in unleavened bread: sometimes the wine and water were mingled, sometimes they were pure; and they admitted some persons to it sometimes, which at other times she rejected: sometimes the consecration was made by one form, sometimes by another: and to conclude, sometimes it was given to infants, sometimes not: and she had power so to do; for in all things where there was not a commandment of Christ expressed or implied in the nature and in the end of the institution, the church had power to alter the particulars, as was most expedient, or conducing to edification: and although the after ages of the church which refused to communicate infants, have found some little things against the lawfulness, and those ages that used it found out some pretences for its necessity; yet both the one and the other had liberty to follow their own necessities, so in all things they followed Christ. Certainly there is infinitely more reason why infants may be communicated, than why they may not be baptized. And that this discourse may revert to its first intention; although there is no record extant of any church in the world, that from the apostles' days inclusively to this very day ever refused to baptize their children, yet if they had upon any present reason, they might also change their practice, when the reason should be changed; and therefore if there were nothing else in it, yet the universal practice of all churches in all ages, is abundantly sufficient to determine us, and to legitimate the practice, since Christ hath not forbidden it. It is sufficient confutation to disagreeing people to use the words of St. Paul, *we have no such custom, nor the churches of God*, to suffer children to be strangers from the covenant of promise,

till they shall enter into it as Jews or Turks may enter, that is, by choice and disputation. But although this alone, to modest and obedient, that is, to Christian spirits, be sufficient, yet this is more than the question did need. It can stand upon its proper foundation.

\* *Quicumque parvulos recentes ab uteris matrum baptizandos negat, anathema esto.* He that refuseth to baptize his infants, shall be in danger of the council.

### THE PRAYER.

O HOLY and eternal Jesus, who in thy own person wert pleased to sanctify the waters of baptism and by thy institution and commandment didst make them effectual to excellent purposes of grace and remedy, be pleased to verify the holy effects of baptism to me and all thy servants whose names are dedicated to thee in an early and timely presentation, and enable us with thy grace to verify all our promises, by which we were bound, then when thou didst first make us thy own portion and relatives in the consummation of a holy covenant. O be pleased to pardon all those indecencies and unhandsome interruptions of that state of favour in which thou didst plant us by thy grace, and admit us by the gates of baptism: and let that spirit which moved upon those holy waters never be absent from us, but call upon us and invite us by a perpetual argument and daily solicitations and inducements to holiness; that we may never return to the filthiness of sin, but by the answer of a good conscience may please thee and glorify thy name, and do honour to thy religion and institution in this world, and may receive the blessings and the rewards of it in the world to come, being presented to thee pure and spotless in the day of thy power when thou shalt lead thy church to a kingdom, and endless glories. Amen.

\* Concil. Milevit. Can. 2.

THE  
**HISTORY**  
OF  
THE LIFE AND DEATH  
OF THE  
**HOLY JESUS.**

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**PART II.**

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Beginning at the Time of his FIRST MIRACLE, until the second  
Year of his PREACHING.



TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND EXCELLENT LADY

*THE LADY MARY,*

COUNTESS DOWAGER OF NORTHAMPTON.

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*I Am now to present to your Honour part of that production of which your great love to sanctity was parent, and which was partly designed to satisfy those great appetites to virtue which have made you hugely apprehensive and forward to entertain any instrument whereby you may grow and increase in the service of God, and the communion and charities of holy people. Your Honour best knows in what soil the first design of these papers grew, and but that the excellent personage who was their first root is transplanted for a time, that he may not have his righteous soul vexed with the impurer conversation of ill-minded men, I am confident you would have received the fruits of his abode, to more excellent purposes. But because he was pleased to leave the managing of this to me I hope your honour will for his sake entertain what that rare person conceived, though I was left to the pains and dangers of bringing forth, and that it may dwell with you for its first relation rather than be rejected*

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

*for its appendant imperfections, which it contracted not in the fountain but in the channels of its progress and emanation. Madam, I shall beg of God that your honour may receive as great increment of piety and ghostly strength in the reading this book, as I receive honour if you shall be pleased to accept and own this as a confession of your great worthiness, and a testimony of the service which ought to be paid to your honour by,*

*Madam,*

*Your Honour's most humble*

*And most obliged Servant,*

**JER. TAYLOR.**



THE  
**LIFE**  
OF  
OUR BLESSED LORD AND SAVIOUR,  
**JESUS CHRIST.**

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SECT. X.

*Of the first Manifestation of Jesus, by the Testimony of  
John, and a Miracle.*

AFTER that the Baptist by a sign from heaven was confirmed in spirit and understanding, that Jesus was the Messiah, he immediately published to the Jews what God had manifested to him; and first to the priests and Levites sent in legation from the sanhedrim, he professed indefinitely in answer to their question, that himself was not the Christ, nor Elias, nor that prophet whom they by a special tradition did expect to be revealed they knew not when. And concerning himself definitely he said nothing, but that he was *the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.* He 'it was who was then amongst them, but not known, a person of great dignity, to whom the Baptist was not worthy to do the office of the lowest ministry, who coming after John, was preferred far before him, who was to increase, and the Baptist was to decrease, who did baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

This was the character of his personal prerogatives, but as yet no demonstration was made of his person, till after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus, and then whenever the Baptist saw Jesus, he points him out with his finger. *Behold the Lamb of God*

*that taketh away the sins of the world, this is he.* Then he shews him to Andrew Simon Peter's brother, with the same designation, and to another disciple with him, *who both followed Jesus, and abode with him all night*; Andrew brings his brother Simon with him, and then Christ changes his name from Simon to Peter or Cephas, which signifies a stone. Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bade him follow him, and Philip finds out Nathaniel, and calls him to see. Thus persons bred in a dark cell, upon their first ascent up to the chambers of light, all run staring upon the beauties of the sun, and call the partners of their darkness to communicate in their new and stranger revelation.

When Nathaniel was come to Jesus, Christ saw his heart, and gave him a testimony to be truly honest, and full of holy simplicity, *a true Israelite without guile.* And Nathaniel, being overjoyed that he had found the Messias, believing out of love, and loving by reason of his joy, and no suspicion; took that for a proof and verification of his person, which was very insufficient to confirm a doubt, or ratify a probability; but so we believe a story, which we love, taking probabilities for demonstrations, and casual accidents for probabilities, and any thing creates vehement presumptions, in which cases our guides are not our knowing faculties, but our affections, and if they be holy, God guides them into the right persuasions, as he does little birds to make rare nests; though they understand not the mystery of operation, nor the design and purpose of the action.

But Jesus took his will and forwardness of affections in so good part, that he promised him greater things, and this gave occasion to the first prophecy, which was made by Jesus. *For Jesus said unto him, Because I said, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these:* and then he prophesied that he should see <sup>a</sup> *heaven open, and the angels of God ascending, and descending upon*

*the Son of Man.* But being a doctor of the law, Christ chose him not at all to the college of apostles.

Much about the same time there happened to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee in the vicinage of his dwelling, where John the evangelist is by some supposed to have been the bridegroom; (but of this there is no certainty,) and thither Jesus being with his mother invited, he went to do civility to the persons espoused, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. The persons then married were but of indifferent fortunes, richer in love of neighbours, than in the fullness of rich possessions; they had more company than wine. For the master of the feast, whom according to the order and piety of the nation they chose from the order of <sup>a</sup> priests to be the president of the feast, by the reverence of his person to restrain all inordination, by his discretion to govern and order the circumstances, by his religious knowledge to direct the solemnities of marriage, and to retain all the persons and actions in the bounds of prudence and modesty, complained to the bridegroom that the guests wanted wine.

As soon as the holy Virgin Mother had notice of the want; out of charity, that uses to be employed in supplying even the minutest and smallest articles of necessity, as well as the clamorous importunity of extremities and great indigencies, complained to her son by an indefinite address; not desiring him to make supply, for she knew not how he should, but either out of an habitual commiseration she complained without hoping for remedy, or else she looked on him who was a fountain of holiness and of plenty, as expecting a derivation from him, either of discourses or miracles. But *Jesus answered her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.* By this answer intending no denial to the purpose of his mother's intimation, to whom he alway bare a re-

<sup>a</sup> Gaudent. Brixian. tract 9. Hujusmodi fuerunt modesta illa Sertorii convivia quæ descripsit Plutarchus, δαίτῃνα πολλὴν ἔχοντα αἰδῶ καὶ κόσμον· ὁδὲ ὁρᾷ τινῶν αἰσχυρῶν. ὅτε ἀκύειν ὑπομένει· ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς συνόντας ἐυτάκτους καὶ ἀνυβρίστους παιδείαις χρῆσθαι, καὶ φιλοφροσύνης ἐκείνοις, Plut. in Sertor.

ligious, and pious reverence, but to signify that he was not yet entered into his period and years of miracles; and when he did, it must be not for respect of kindred, or civil relations; but as it is a derivation of power from above, so it must be in pursuit of that service and design, which he had received in charge together with his power.

And so his mother understood him, giving express charge to the ministers to do whatsoever he commanded; *Jesus therefore bid them fill the water pots which stood there* for the use of frequent washings, which the Jews did use in all public meetings, for fear of touching pollutions, or contracting legal impurities; which they did with a curiousness next to superstition, washing the very beds and tables used at their feasts. The ministers filled them to the brim, and as they were commanded, drew out and bare unto the governor of the feast, who knew not of it, till the miracle grew public, and like light shewed itself: for while they wondered at the economy of that feast in keeping the best wine till the last, it grew apparent, that he who was the Lord of the creatures, who in their first seeds have an obediencial capacity to receive the impresses of what forms he pleases to imprint, could give new natures, and produce new qualities in that subject, in which he chooses to glorify his Son.

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee. For all those miracles which are reported to be done by Christ in his infancy, and interval of his younger years, are apocryphal and spurious, feigned by trifling understandings, (who think to serve God with a well-meant lie,) and promoted by the credulity of such persons, in whose hearts easiness, folly, and credulity are bound up and tied fast with silken thread, and easy softnesses of religious affections, not made severe by the rigours of wisdom and experience. *This first miracle manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.*

## Ad. SECT. X.

*Considerations touching the Vocation of Five Disciples,  
and of the first Miracle of Jesus done at Cana in  
Galilee.*

AS soon as ever John the Baptist was taught by the descent of the holy Spirit, that this was Jesus, he instantly preaches him to all that came near him. For the Holy Ghost was his commission, and instruction; and now he was a minister evangelical; and taught all those that have the honour to be servants in so sacred employment, that they must not go till they be sent, nor speak till they be instructed, nor yet hold their peace when their commission is signed by the consignation of the spirit in ordinary ministry. For *all power and all wisdom is from above*, and in spiritual ministrations is a direct emanation from the Holy Spirit: that as no man is fit to speak the mysteries of godliness, be his person never so holy, unless he derive wisdom in order to such ministries; so be he never so instructed by the assistance of art or infused knowledge, yet unless he also have derived power as well as skill, authority as well as knowledge from the same spirit, he is not enabled to minister in public in ordinary ministrations. The Baptist was sent by a prime designation to prepare the way to Jesus, and was instructed by the same Spirit, which had sanctified or consecrated him in his mother's womb to this holy purpose.

When the Baptist had shewed Jesus to Andrew and another disciple, they immediately follow him with the distances and fears of the first approach, and the infirmities of new converts; but Jesus seeing them following their first light, invited them to see the sun; For God loves to cherish infants in grace, and having sown the immortal seed in their hearts if it takes root

downwards, and springs out into the verdure of a leaf he still waters it with the gentle rain of the Holy Spirit, in graces and new assistances, till it brings forth the fruits of a holy conversation. And God, who knows that infants have need of pleasant, and gentle, and frequent nutriment, hath given to them this comfort, that himself will take care of their first beginnings, and improve them to the strength of men, and give them the strengths of nature, and the wisdom of the spirit, which ennoble men to excellencies and perfections. By the preaching of the Baptist they were brought to seek for Christ, and when they did, Christ found them, and brought them home, and made them stay all night with him; which was more favour, than they looked for. For so God usually dispenses his mercies, that they may run over our thoughts and expectations, and are given in no proportion to us, but according to God's measures, he considering not what we are worthy of, but what is fit for him to give; he only requiring of us capacities to receive his favour, and fair reception and entertainment of his graces.

When Andrew had found Jesus, he calls his brother Simon to be partaker of his joys, which (as it happens in accidents of greatest pleasure) cannot be contained within the limits of the possessor's thoughts. But this calling of Peter was not to a beholding, but to a participation of his felicities; for he is strangely covetous, who would enjoy the sun, or the air, or the sea, alone; here was treasure for him and all the world; and by lighting his brother Simon's taper he made his own light the greater, and more glorious. And this is the nature of grace, to be diffusive of its own excellencies; for here no envy can inhabit; the proper and personal ends of holy persons in the contact, and transmissions of grace are increased by the participation and communion of others. For our prayers are more effectual, our aids increased, our encouragement and examples more prevalent, God more honoured, and the rewards of glory have accidental advantages

by the superaddition of every new saint and beatified person; the members of the mystical body, when they have received nutriment from God, and his holy Son, supplying to each other the same which themselves received, and live on, in the communion of saints. Every new star gilds the firmament, and increases its first glories; and those, who are instruments of the conversion of others; shall not only introduce new beauties, but when themselves shine like the stars in glory, they shall have some reflexions from the light of others, to whose fixing in the orb of heaven themselves have been instrumental: And this consideration is not only of use in the exaltations of the dignity apostolical and clerical, but for the enkindling even of private charities; who may do well to promote others interests of piety, in which themselves also have some concernment.

These disciples asked of Christ *where he dwelt*; *Jesus answered, Come and see.* It was an answer very expressive of our duty in this instance. It is not enough for us to understand where Christ inhabits, or where he is to be found; for our understandings may follow him afar off, and we receive no satisfaction; unless it be to curiosity; but we must go where he is, eat of his meat, wash in his lavatory, rest on his beds, and dwell with him; for the holy Jesus hath no kind influence upon those, who stand at distance, save only the affections of a loadstone, apt to draw them nigher, that he may transmit his virtues by union and confederations; but if they persist in a sullen distance, they shall learn his glories, as Dives understood the peace of Lazarus, of which he was never to participate. Although the *Son of Man had not where to hide his head*, yet he hath many houses where to convey his graces. He hath nothing to cover his own, but he hath enough to sanctify ours; and as he dwelt in such houses; which the charity of good people then afforded for his entertainment, so now he loves to abide in places which the religion of his ser-

vants bath vowed to his honour, and the advantages of evangelical ministrations. Thither we must come to him, or any where else where we may enjoy him; he is to be found in a church, in his ordinances, in the communion of saints, in every religious duty, in the heart of every holy person; and if we go to him by the addresses of religion in holy places, by the ministry of holy rites, by charity, by the adherences of faith, and hope, and other combining graces, the graces of union and society, or prepare a lodging for him within us, that he may come to us, then shall we see such glories and interior beauties, which none know but they that dwell with him.\* The secrets of spiritual benediction are understood only by them, to whom they are conveyed, even by the children of his house. *Come and see.*

St. Andrew was called, and that by Christ immediately, his brother Simon next, and that by Andrew; but yet Jesus changed Simon's name, and not the others; and by this change designed him to an eminency of office, at least in signification, principally above his brother, or else separately, and distinctly from him; to shew that these graces and favours, which do not immediately co-operate to eternity, but are gifts and offices, or impresses of authority, are given to men irregularly, and without any order of prædisponent causes, or probabilities on our part, but are issues of absolute prædestination; and as they have efficacy from those reasons which God conceals, so they have some purposes as concealed as their causes: only if God pleases to make us vessels of fair employment and great capacity, we shall bear a greater burthen, and are bound to glorify God with special offices; but as these exterior and ineffective graces are given upon the same good will of God, which made this matter to be a human body, when if God had so pleased it was as capable of being made a

\* *Secreta mea mihi, & filiis domus meæ.* Clem. Alex. Strom,



fungus or a sponge: so they are given to us with the same intentions as are our souls, that we might glorify God in the distinct capacity of grace, as before, of a reasonable nature. And besides that it teaches us to magnify God's free mercy, so it removes every such exalted person from being an object of envy to others, or from pleasing himself in vainer opinions; for God hath made him of such an employment as freely and voluntarily as he hath made him a man, and he no more co-operated to this grace, than to his own creation, and may as well admire himself for being born in Italy, or from rich parents, or for having two hands or two feet, as for having received such a designation extraordinary. But these things are never instruments of reputation among severe understandings, and never but in the sottish and unmanly apprehensions of the vulgar. Only this, when God hath imprinted an authority upon a person, although the man hath nothing to please himself withal but God's grace, yet others are to pay the duty which that impression demands; which duty because it reapports to God, and touches not the man, but as it passes through him, to the fountain of authority and grace, it extinguishes all pretences of opinion and pride.

When Jesus espied Nathanael (who also had been called by the first disciples) coming towards him, he gave him an excellent character, calling him *a true Israelite in whom was no guile*, and admitted him amongst the first disciples of the institution; by this character in one of the first of his scholars hallowing simplicity of spirit, and receiving it into his discipline, that it might now become a virtue and duty evangelical. For although it concerns us, as a christian duty, to be prudent, yet the prudence of christianity is a duty of spiritual effect, and in instances of religion, with no other purposes than to avoid giving offence to those that are without, and to those that are within; that we cause no disreputation to christianity; that we do nothing that may encourage enemies

to the religion, and that those that are within the communion and obedience of the church, may not suffer as great inconveniences by the indiscreet conduct of religious actions, as by direct temptations to a sin. These are the purposes of private prudence, to which in a greater measure, and upon more variety of rules the governors of churches are obliged. But that which christian simplicity prohibits, is the mixing arts, and unhandsome means for the purchase of our ends; witty counsels that are underminings of our neighbour, destroying his just interest to serve our own; stratagems to deceive, indefinite and insignificant answers, with fraudulent design, unjust and unlawful concealment of our purposes, fallacious promises and false pretences, flattery and unjust and unreasonable praise, saying one thing and meaning the contrary, pretending religion to secular designs, breaking faith, taking false oaths, and such other instruments of human purposes framed by the devil, and sent into the world to be perfected by man. Christian simplicity speaks nothing but its thoughts; and when it concerns prudence, that a thought or purpose should be concealed, it concerns simplicity that silence be its cover, and not a false vizard; it rather suffers inconvenience than a lie, it destroys no man's right, though it be inconsistent with my advantages, it reproofs freely, palliates no man's wickedness, it intends what it ought, and does what is bidden, and uses courses regular and just, sneaks not in corners, and walks always in the eye of God, and the face of the world.

Jesus told Nathanael, that he knew him when he saw him under the fig tree, and Nathanael took that to be probation sufficient, that he was the Messiah, and believed rightly upon an insufficient motive; which because Jesus did accept, it gives testimony to us that however faith be produced, by means regular, or by arguments incompetent, whether it be proved or not proved, whether by chance or deliberation, whether wisely or by occasion; so that faith be pro-

duced by the instrument; and love by faith, God's work is done and so is ours. For if St. Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached, though by the envy of peevish persons; certainly God will not reject an excellent product, because it came from a weak and sickly parent: and he that brings good out of evil, and rejoices in that good having first triumphed upon the evil, will certainly take delight in the faith of the most ignorant persons, which his own grace hath produced out of innocent though insufficient beginnings. It was folly in Naaman to refuse to be cured, because he was to recover only by washing in Jordan. The more incompetent the means is, the greater is the glory of God, who hath produced waters from a rock, and fire from the collision of a sponge and wool; and it is certain, the end, unless it be in products merely natural, does not take its estimate and degrees from the external means. Grace does miracles, and the productions of the spirit in respect of its instruments, are equivocal, extraordinary, and supernatural; and ignorant persons believe as strongly, though they know not why, and love God as heartily as greater spirits and more excellent understandings; and when God pleases, or if he sees it expedient, he will do to others as to Nathanael, give them greater arguments, and better instruments, for the confirmation and heightening of their faith, than they had for the first production.

When Jesus had chosen these few disciples to be witnesses of succeeding accidents, every one of which was to be a probation of his mission and divinity, he entered into the theatre of the world at a marriage feast; which he now first hallowed to a sacramental signification, and made to become mysterious; he now began to choose his spouse out from the communities of the world, and did mean to endear her by unions ineffable and glorious, and consign the sacrament by his blood, which he first gave in a secret representment, and afterwards in letter and apparent ef-

fusion. And although the holy Jesus did in his own person consecrate celibate; and abstinence and chastity in his mother's; yet by his presence he also hallowed marriage, and made it honourable, not only in civil account, and the rites of heraldry, but in a spiritual sense, he having new sublimed it by making it a sacramental representment of the union of Christ and his spouse the church. And all married persons should do well to remember, what the conjugal society does represent, and not break the matrimonial bond, which is a mysterious ligament of Christ and his church; for whoever dissolves the sacredness of the mystery, and unhallows the vow by violence and impurity, he dissolves his relation to Christ. To break faith with a wife or husband is a divorce from Jesus, and that is a separation from all possibilities of felicity. In the time of the Mosaical statutes, to violate marriage was to do injustice and dishonour, and a breach to the sanctions of nature, or the first constitutions; but two bands more are added in the gospel, to make marriage more sacred: for now our bodies are made temples of the Holy Ghost, and the rite of marriage is made significant and sacramental, and every act of adultery is profanation and irreligion, it desecrates a temple and deflours a mystery.

The married pair were holy, but poor, and they wanted wine, and the blessed Virgin Mother, pitying the affront of the young man, complained to Jesus of the want; and Jesus gave her an answer which promised no satisfaction to her purposes. For now that Jesus had lived thirty years, and done in person nothing answerable to his glorious birth, and miraculous accidents of his person, she longed till the time came in which he was to manifest himself by actions as miraculous as the star of his birth; she knew by the rejecting of his trade, and his going abroad, and probably by his own discourse to her, that the time was near; and the forwardness of her love and holy desires

possibly might go some minutes before his own precise limit. However Jesus answered to this purpose, to shew that the work he was to do, was done, not to satisfy her importunity, which is not occasion enough for a miracle, but to prosecute the great work of divine designation. For in works spiritual and religious, all exterior relation ceases; the world's order and the manner of our nature, and the infirmities of our person have produced societies, and they have been the parents of relation; and God hath tied them fast by the knots of duty, and made the duty the occasion and opportunities of reward: but in actions spiritual, in which we relate to God, our relations are founded upon the spirit, and therefore we must do our duties upon considerations separate and spiritual; but never suffer temporal relations to impede our religious duties; christian charity is a higher thing than to be confined within the terms of dependence and correlation, \* and those endearments which leagues, or nature, or society have made, pass into spiritual, and like stars in the presence of the sun, appear not when the heights of the spirit are in place. Where duty hath prepared special instances, there we must for religion sake promote them; but even to our parents, or our children, the charities of religion ought to be greater than the affections of society. And though we are bound in all offices exterior to prefer our relatives before others, because that is made a duty; yet to purposes spiritual all persons eminently holy, put on the efficacy of the same relations, and pass a duty upon us of religious affections.

At the command of Jesus the water pots were filled with water, and the water was by his divine power turned into wine; where the different œconomy of God and the world is highly observable. *Every man sets forth good wine at first, and then the worse; but*

\* Ευχρίνεια γὰρ οἰκτιρίᾳ πρὸς τοὺς αἵμας ἢ τοὺς δικαιοσύνης, ὅς τιςαν ἑλλαν ἀρετῇ ὁμιλῶν.  
Philo in exposit. general.

God not only turns the water into wine, but into such wine that the last draught is most pleasant. The world presents us with fair language, promising hopes, convenient fortunes, pompous honours, and these are the outsides of the bowl; but when it is swallowed, these dissolve in the instant, and there remains bitterness, and the malignity of colloquintida. Every sin smiles in the first address, and carries light in the face, and honey in the lip, but *when we have well drunk then comes that which is worse*, a whip with six strings, fears and terrors of conscience, and shame and displeasure, and a cautive disposition, and diffidence in the day of death. But when *after the manner of the purifying of the christians* we fill our water pots with water, watering our couch with our tears, and moistening our cheeks with the perpetual distillations of repentance, then Christ turns our water into wine, first penitents and then communicants, first waters of sorrow, and then the wine of the chalice; first the justifications of correction, and then the sanctifications of the sacrament, and the effects of the divine power, joy, and peace, and serenity, hopes full of confidence, and confidence without shame, and boldness without presumption; for Jesus keeps the best wine till the last, not only because of the direct reservations of the highest joys till the nearer approaches of glory, but also because our relishes are higher after a long fruition, than at the first essays, such being the nature of grace, that it increases in relish, as it does in fruition, every part of grace being new duty and new reward.

### THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL and ever blessed Jesu, who didst choose disciples, to be witnesses of thy life and miracles, so adopting man into a participation of thy great employment of bringing us to heaven by the means of a holy doctrine, be pleased to give me thy grace that I may

love and revere their persons, whom thou hast set over me, and follow their faith, and imitate their lives while they imitate thee, and that I also in my capacity and proportion may do some of the meaner offices of spiritual building, by prayers, and by holy discourses, and fraternal correction, and friendly exhortations, doing advantages to such souls with whom I shall converse: and since thou wert pleased to enter upon the stage of the world with the commencement of mercy, and a miracle, be pleased to visit my soul with thy miraculous grace, turn my water into wine, my natural desires into supernatural perfections, and let my sorrows be turned into joys, my sins into virtuous habits, the weaknesses of humanity into communications of the divine nature, that since thou keepest the best unto the last, I may by thy assistance grow from grace to grace, till thy gifts be turned to reward, and thy graces to participation of thy glory, O eternal and ever blessed Jesu. Amen.



## DISCOURSE VII.

### *Of Faith.*

NATHANAEL'S faith was produced by an argument not demonstrative, not certainly concluding; Christ knew him when he saw him first, and he believed him to be the Messiah; his faith was excellent, whatever the argument was. And if I believe a God because the sun is a glorious body, or because of the variety of plants, or the fabric and rare contexture of a man's eye, I may as fully assent to the conclusion, as if my belief dwelt upon the demonstrations made by the prince of philosophers in the eighth of his physics, and twelveth of his metaphysics. This I premise as an inlet into the consideration concerning the faith of ignorant persons. For if we consider upon

what easy terms most of us now are christians, we may possibly suspect that either faith hath but little excellence in it, or we but little faith, or that we are mistaken generally in its definition. For we are born of christian parents, made christians at ten days old, interrogated concerning the articles of our faith by way of anticipation, even then when we understand not the difference between the sun and a tallow candle; from thence we are taught to say our catechism, as we are taught to speak, when we have no reason to judge, no discourse to discern, no arguments to contest against a proposition, in case we be catechised into false doctrine; and all that is put to us, we believe infinitely, and without choice, as children use not to choose their language; and as our children are made christians, just so are thousands others made Mahometans, with the same necessity, the same facility. So that thus far there is little thanks due to us for believing the christian creed, 'it was indifferent to us at first, and at last our education had so possest us, and our interest, and our no temptation to the contrary, that as we were disposed into this condition by Providence, so we remain in it without praise or excellency. For as our beginnings are inevitable, so our progress is imperfect, and insufficient, and what we begun by education we retain only by custom, and if we be instructed in some slighter arguments to maintain the sect or faction of our country religion, as it disturbs the unity of christendom, yet if we examine and consider the account upon what slight arguments we have taken up Christianity itself, (as that it is the religion of our country, or that our fathers before us were of the same faith, or because the priest bids us, and he is a good man, or for something else, but we know not what) we must needs conclude it the good providence of God, not our choice, that made us christians.

But if the question be, whether such a faith be in itself good and acceptable? that relies upon insuffi-



cient and unconvincing grounds; I suppose this case of Nathanael will determine us, and when we consider that faith is an infused grace, if God pleases to behold his own glory in our weakness of understanding, it is but the same thing he does in the instances of his other graces. For as God enkindles charity upon variety of means, and instruments, by a thought, by a chance, by a text of scripture, by a natural tenderness, by the sight of a dying or a tormented beast: so also he may produce faith by arguments of a differing quality, and by issues of his providence he may engage us in such conditions, in which as our understanding is not great enough to choose the best, so neither is it furnished with powers to reject any proposition; and to believe well is an effect of a singular predestination, and is a gift in order to a grace, as that grace is in order to salvation. But the insufficiency of an argument, or disability to prove our religion is so far from disabling the goodness of an ignorant man's faith, that as it may be as strong as the faith of the greatest scholar, so it hath full as much excellency, not of nature, but in order to divine acceptance. For as he, who believes upon the only stock of education, made no election of his faith; so he, who believes what is demonstrably proved, is forced by the demonstration of his choice. Neither of them did choose, and both of them may equally love the article.

So that, since a small argument in a weak understanding does the same work, that a strong argument in a more sober and learned, that is, it convinces and makes faith, and yet neither of them is matter of choice; if the thing believed be good, and matter of duty or necessity, the faith is not rejected by God upon the weakness of the first, nor accepted upon the strength of the latter principles; when we are once in it will not be enquired by what entrance we passed thither? whether God leads us, or drives us in, whether we come by discourse or by inspiration, by the guide

of an angel or the conduct of Moses, whether we be born or made christians, it is indifferent, so we be there, where we should be; for this is but the gate of duty, and the entrance to felicity. For thus far faith is but an act of the understanding, which is a natural faculty, serving indeed as an instrument to godliness, but of itself no part of it; and it is just like fire, producing its act inevitably, and burning as long as it can, without power to interrupt or suspend its action, and therefore we cannot be more pleasing to God for understanding rightly, than the fire is for burning clearly; which puts us evidently upon this consideration; that christian faith, that glorious duty, which gives to christians a great degree of approximation to God by Jesus Christ, must have a great proportion of that ingredient which makes actions good or bad, that is, of choice and election.

For the faith of a christian hath more in it of will than of the understanding. Faith is that great mark of distinction, which separates and gives formality to the covenant of the gospel, which is a law of faith. The faith of a christian is his religion, that is, it is that whole conformity to the institution or discipline of Jesus Christ, which distinguishes him from the believers of false religions. And to be one of the faithful signifies the same with being a disciple, and that contains obedience as well as believing. For to the same sense are all those appellatives in scripture (*the faithful, brethren, believers, the saints, disciples*), all representing the duty of a christian; a believer and a saint, or a holy person, is the same thing, (*brethren*); signifies charity, and (*believers*) faith in the intellectual sense, (*the faithful and disciples*) signify both; for besides the consent to the proposition, the first of them is also used for perseverance and sanctity, and the greatest of charity mixt with a confident faith up to the height of martyrdom. \* *Be faithful unto the*

\* Gal. 5. 6.—6. 15.

*death* (said the holy Spirit) *and I will give thee the crown of life.* And when the apostles by way of abbreviation express all the body of christian religion; they call it *faith working by love*, which also St. Paul in a parallel place calls a *new creature*, it is, <sup>a</sup> *a keeping of the commandments of God*; that is the faith of a christian, into whose definition charity is ingredient, whose sense is the same with keeping of God's commandments; so that if we define faith, we must first distinguish it. The faith of a natural person, or the faith of devils is a mere believing a certain number of propositions, upon conviction of the understanding. But the faith of a christian, the faith that justifies, and saves him, is faith <sup>b</sup> *working by charity*, or *faith keeping the commandments of God*. They are distinct faiths, in order to different ends, and therefore of different constitution, and the instrument of distinction is charity or obedience.

<sup>c</sup> And this great truth is clear in the perpetual testimony of holy scripture. For Abraham is called the *Father of the faithful*, and yet our blessed Saviour told the Jews, that if they had been <sup>e</sup> *the sons of Abraham* they would have done *the works of Abraham*, and therefore good works are by the apostle called, the <sup>d</sup> *footsteps of the faith of our Father Abraham*. For faith in every of its stages, at its first beginning, at its increment, at its greatest perfection is a duty made up of the concurrence of the will and the understanding, when it pretends to the divine acceptance; faith and repentance begin the christian course. *Repent and believe the gospel*, was the sum of the apostles sermons, and all the way after, it is, *faith working by love*. Repentance puts the first spirit and life into faith, and charity preserves it, and gives it nourishment and increase; itself also growing by a mutual supply of spirits and nutriment from faith. Whoever does heartily believe a resurrection and

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 2. 19.

<sup>b</sup> Gal. 5. 6.

<sup>c</sup> John 8. 39.

<sup>d</sup> Rom. 4. 12.

life eternal upon certain conditions, will certainly endeavour to acquire the promises by the purchase of obedience and observation of the conditions. For it is not in the nature or power of man, directly to despise and reject so infinite a good: so that faith supplies charity with argument and maintenance, and charity supplies faith with life and motion: faith makes charity reasonable; and charity makes faith living and effectual. And therefore the old Greeks called faith and charity “a miraculous chariot or yoke,” they bear the burthen of the Lord with an equal confederation; these are like Hippocrate’s twins, they live and die together. Indeed faith is the first born of the twins, but they must come both at a birth, or else they die, being strangled at the gates of the womb.<sup>b</sup> But if charity, like Jacob, lays hold upon his elder brother’s heel, it makes a timely and a prosperous birth, and gives certain title to the eternal promises. For let us give the right of primogeniture to faith, yet the blessing, yea and the inheritance too, will at last fall to charity. Not that faith is disinherited, but that charity only enters into the possession. The nature of faith passes into the excellency of charity, before they can be rewarded, and that both may have their estimate, that which justifies and saves us keeps the name of faith, but doth not do the deed till it hath the nature of charity: for to think well, or to have a good opinion, or an excellent or a fortunate understanding, entitles us not to the love of God, and the consequent inheritance, but to choose the ways of the spirit, and to relinquish the paths of darkness, this is the way of the kingdom and the purpose of the gospel, and the proper work of faith.

\* θαυμασὴν ξυστάδα.

<sup>b</sup> Τὸ ἀγαθὸς μὲν εἶναι ἡμεῖς ἢ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὅτε ἐν τῇ γνώσει ἔθηκε γνωσσομένον, ἀλλ’ ἐν τῇ αἰτίᾳ τῶν αἰρεμένων. *Just. M. resp. ad ortho.* ὁ δὲν κέρδιον ἡγιῶς πίστεως τῆς πολυτέλειας διαφθααρμένης. *Chrys. l. 4. de sacer.*

And if we consider upon what stock faith itself is instrumental and operative of salvation, we shall find it is itself acceptable, because it is a duty, and commanded, and therefore it is an act of obedience, a work of the gospel, a submitting the understanding, a denying the affections, a laying aside all interests, and a bringing our thoughts under the obedience of Christ. This the apostle calls *the obedience of faith*, and it is of the same condition and constitution with other graces, all which equally relate to Christ, and are as firm instruments of union, and are washed by the blood of Christ, and are sanctified by his death, and apprehend him in their capacity and degrees, some higher, and some not so high: but hope and charity apprehend Christ in a measure and proportion greater than faith, when it distinguishes from them; so that if faith does the work of justification, as it is a mere relation to Christ, then so also does hope and charity; or if these are duties and good works, so also is faith, and they all being alike commanded in order to the same end, and encouraged by the same reward, are also accepted upon the same stock, which is, that they are acts of obedience and relation too, they obey Christ, and lay hold upon Christ's merits, and are but several instances of the great duty of a christian, but the actions of several faculties of the new creature. But because faith is the beginning grace, and hath influence and causality in the production of the other, therefore all the other as they are united in duty are also united in their title and appellation; they are all called by the name of faith, because they are parts of faith, as faith is taken in the larger sense, and when it is taken in the strictest and distinguishing sense, they are effects and proper products by way of natural emanation.

That a good life is the genuine and true born issue of faith, no man questions, that knows himself the disciple of the holy Jesus; and that obedience is the

\* Rom. 16. 26.

same thing with faith, <sup>a</sup> and that all christian graces are parts of its bulk and constitution, is also the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and the grammar of scripture, making faith and obedience to be terms coincident and expressive of each other. For faith is not a single star, but a constellation, a chain of graces called by St. Paul, *'the power of God unto salvation to every believer*, that is, faith is all that great instrument, by which God intends to bring us to heaven; and he gives this reason, *In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith*, for it is written, *The just shall live by faith*. Which discourse makes faith to be a course of sanctity and holy habits, a continuation of a christian's duty, such a duty as not only gives the first breath, but by which a man lives the life of grace. *'The just shall live by faith*; that is, such a faith as grows from step to step till the whole righteousness of God be fulfilled in it. From faith to faith (saith the apostle) which St. Austin expounds, from faith believing, to faith obeying, from imperfect faith to faith made perfect by the animation of charity, that he *who is justified may be justified still*: for as there are several degrees and parts of justification, so there are several degrees of faith answerable to it, that in all senses it may be true that by faith we are justified, and by faith we live, and by faith we are saved; for if we proceed from faith to faith, from believing to obeying, from faith in the understanding to faith in the will, from faith barely assenting to the revelations of God, to faith obeying the commandments of God, from the body of faith to the soul of faith, that is, to faith formed and made alive by charity, then we shall proceed from justification to justification; that is, from remission of sins to become the sons of God, and at last to an actual possession of those glo-

<sup>a</sup> Fides (authore Cicerone) est firma opinio : & est fidei mandatorum execution. dicta est autem fides (ut ait idem Cicero de officiis) à fide, quod id fieri debeat quod dictum & promissum est.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. I. 16, 17.

<sup>c</sup> Ex fide annuntiantium Evangelium in fidem obedientium Evangelio. S. Aug.

ries, to which we were here consigned by the fruits of the Holy Ghost.

And in this sense the holy Jesus is called by the apostle, *the author and finisher of our faith*, he is the principal, and he is the promoter, he begins our faith, in revelations, and perfects it in commandments; he leads us by the assent of our understanding, and finishes the work of his grace by a holy life: which St. Paul there expresses by its several constituent parts, as *laying aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us; and running with patience the race, that is set before us, resisting unto blood: striving against sin*, for in these things Jesus is therefore made our example, because he is *the author and finisher of our faith*; without these, faith is imperfect. But the thing is something plainer yet, for St. James says *that faith lives not but by charity*; and the life or essence of a thing is certainly the better part of its constitution, as the soul is to a man. And if we mark the manner of his probation it will come home to the main point. For he proves that *Abraham's faith was therefore imputed to him for righteousness*, because *he was justified by works*; *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up his son? And the scripture was fulfilled, saying, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, for faith wrought with his works, and made his faith perfect*; <sup>a</sup> it was a dead and an imperfect faith, unless obedience gave it being, and all its integral or essential parts; so that faith and charity in the sense of a Christian are but one duty, as the understanding and the will are but one reasonable soul, only they produce several actions in order to one another, which are but *divers operations and the same spirit*.

Thus St. Paul describing the faith of the Thessalonians calls it that, *whereby they turned from idols*,

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 12. 2.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. 12. v. 1.

<sup>c</sup> James 2. 21, 22.

<sup>d</sup> James 2. 23.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Thess. 1. 8, 9, 10. Heb. 11 per totum. 2 Thess. 3. 2. Gal. 5. 20.

and whereby they served the living God; and the faith of the patriarchs believed the world's creation, received the promises, did miracles, wrought righteousness, and did and suffered so many things, as make up the integrity of a holy life. And therefore disobedience and unrighteousness is called *want of faith*, and heresy which is opposed to faith is *a work of the flesh*,<sup>a</sup> because faith itself is a work of righteousness; and I may enumerate no more particulars, the thing is so known, that the word ἀπειθεία, which in propriety of language signifies mispersuasion or infidelity, is rendered<sup>b</sup> *disobedience*; and the *not providing for our families* is an act of *infidelity*, by the same reason and analogy, that obedience or charity and a holy life are the duties of a Christian, of a justifying faith; and although in the natural or philosophical sense, faith and charity are distinct habits, yet in the sense of a Christian and the signification of duty they are the same; for we<sup>c</sup> cannot believe aright, as believing is in the commandment, unless we live aright, for our faith is put upon the account just as it is made precious by charity; according to that rare saying of St. Bartholomew, recorded by the supposed St. Denis, “Charity is the greatest and the least theology, all our faith, that is, all our religion is completed in the duties of universal charity; as our charity or our manner of living is, so is our faith. If our life be unholy, it may be the faith of devils, but not the faith of Christians. For this is the difference.

The faith of the devils hath more of the understanding in it, the faith of Christians more of the will: The devils in their faith have better discourse, the Christians better affections: They in their faith have better arguments, we more charity: So that charity or a good life is so necessary an ingredient into the definition of a Christian's faith, that we have nothing else to distinguish it

<sup>a</sup> Colos. 3. 6.<sup>b</sup> 1 Tim. 5. 8. vide etiam 1 Tim. 1. 5. 10.<sup>c</sup> ἡ ἀγάπη θεολογία πολλή, καὶ ἐλαχίστη, cap. 1. de myst. Theolog.



from the faith of devils : <sup>a</sup> and we need no trial of our faith, but the examination of our lives. <sup>b</sup> *If you keep the commandments of God, then have you the faith of Jesus*, (they are immediate in St. John's expression,) but if you be importune and ungodly, you are in St. Paul's list amongst them, that *have no faith*. Every vice, that rules amongst us, and sullies the fair beauty of our souls, is a conviction of infidelity.

For it was the faith of Moses, that made him despise the riches of Egypt; the faith of Joshua, that made him valiant; the faith of Joseph, that made him chaste; Abraham's faith made him obedient; St. Mary Magdalen's faith made her penitent; and the faith of St. Paul made him travel so far, and suffer so much, till he became a prodigy both of zeal and patience. Faith is a catholicon, and cures all the distemperatures of the soul, *it overcomes the world*, (saith St. John) *it works righteousness*, (saith St. Paul) *it purifies the heart*, (saith <sup>c</sup> St. Peter) *it works miracles*, (saith our blessed Saviour,) miracles in *grace always*, as it did miracles in nature at its first publication; and whatsoever is good, if it be a grace, it is an act of faith, if it be a reward, it is the fruit of faith; so that as all the actions of man are but the productions of the soul, so are all the actions of the new man the effects of faith. For faith is the life of christianity, and a good life is the life of faith.

Upon the grounds of this discourse we may understand the sense of that question of our blessed Saviour, <sup>d</sup> *When the Son of Man comes, shall he find faith on earth?* Truly just so much as he finds charity, and holy living, and no more. For then only we can be confident that *faith is not failed from among the children of men*, when we feel the hearts of the primitive charity return, and the calentures of the first old devotion are renewed, when it shall be accounted ho-

<sup>a</sup> Apocal. 14. 12.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Thess. 3. 2.

<sup>c</sup> Acts 15. 9.

<sup>d</sup> Luke 18. 8.

nourable to be a servant of Christ, and a shame to commit a sin; then, and then only, our churches shall be assemblies of the faithful, and the kingdoms of the world christian countries. But so long as it is notorious, that we have made Christian religion another thing than what the holy Jesus designed it to be; when it does not make us live good lives, but itself is made a pretence to all manner of impiety, a stratagem to serve ends, the ends of covetousness, of ambition and revenge; when the Christian charity ends in killing one another for conscience sake, so that faith is made to cut the throat of charity, and our faith kills more than our charity preserves; when the humility of a Christian hath indeed a name amongst us, but it is like a mute person talked of only; while ambition and rebellion, pride and scorn, self-seeking and proud understandings transact most of the great affairs of Christendom: when the custody of our senses is to no other purposes, but that no opportunity of pleasing them pass away; when our oaths are like the fringes of our discourses, going round about him, as if they were ornaments and trimmings; when our blasphemies, profanation, sacrilege and irreligion are become scandalous to the very Turks and Jews; while our lusts are always habitual, sometimes unnatural; will any wise man think that we believe those doctrines of humility and obedience, of chastity and charity, of temperance and justice, which the Saviour of the world made sacred by his sermon and example; or indeed any thing he either said or did, promised or threatened? <sup>a</sup> For is it possible, a man with his wits about him and believing that he should certainly be damned (that is, be eternally tormented in body and soul, with torments greater than can be in this world) if he be a swearer, or liar, or drunkard, or cheats his neighbour, that this man should dare to do these

<sup>a</sup> Τὸ ἀπίστεῖν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τῆς πρὸς τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐκτελεῦσθαι τῶν ἐντολῶν γίνεται.  
S. Chrysost. ad Demetr.

things; to which the temptations are so small, in which the delight is so inconsiderable, and the satisfaction so none at all?

We see by the experience of the whole world, that the belief of an honest man in a matter of temporal advantage, makes us do actions of such danger and difficulty, that half so much industry and sufferance would ascertain us into a possession of all the promises evangelical. Now let any man be asked, whether he had rather be rich, or be saved, he will tell you without all doubt, heaven is the better option, by infinite degrees: for it cannot be, that riches, or revenge, or lust should be directly preferred, that is, be thought more eligible than the glories of immortality. That therefore men neglect so great salvation, and so greedily run after the satisfaction of their baser appetites, can be attributed to nothing, but want of faith; they do not heartily believe, that heaven is worth so much; there is upon them a stupidity of spirit, and their faith is dull, and its actions suspended most commonly, and often interrupted, and it never enters into the will: so that the propositions are considered nakedly and precisely in themselves, but not as referring to us or our interests, there is nothing of faith in it, but so much as is the first and direct act of understanding, there is no consideration, nor reflection upon the act or upon the person, or upon the subject: so that even as it is seated in the understanding, our faith is commonly lame, mutilous, and imperfect, and therefore much more is it culpable, because it is destitute of all co-operation of the rational appetite.

But let us consider the power and efficacy of worldly belief. If a man believes, that there is gold to be had in Peru for fetching, or pearls and rich jewels in India for the exchange of trifles, he instantly, if he be in capacity, leaves the wife of his bosom, and the pretty delights of children, and his own security, and ventures into the dangers of waters, and unknown seas, and freezings and calentures, thirst and hunger,

pirates and shipwrecks, and hath within him a principle strong enough to answer all objections, because he believes that riches are desirable, and by such means likely to be had. Our blessed Saviour comparing the gospel to a merchant man, that found a pearl of great price, and sold all to buy it, hath brought this instance home to the present discourse. For if we did as verily believe, that in heaven those great felicities, which transcend all our apprehensions, are certainly to be obtained by leaving our vices, and lower desires, what can hinder us, but we should at least do as much for obtaining those great felicities, as for the lesser, if the belief were equal? for if any man thinks he may have them without holiness, and justice, and charity, then he wants faith, for he believes not the saying of St. Paul; *\* follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall ever see God.* If a man believes learning to be the only or chiefest ornament and beauty of souls, that which will ennoble him to a fair employment in his own time, and an honourable memory to succeeding ages, this if he believes heartily, it hath power to make him endure catarrhs, gouts, hypochondriacal passions, to read till his eyes almost fix in their orbs, to despise the pleasures of idleness, or tedious sports, and to undervalue whatsoever does not co-operate to the end of his faith, the desire of learning. Why is the Italian so abstemious in his drinkings, or the Helvetian so valiant in his fight, or so true to the prince that employs him, but that they believe it to be noble so to be? If they believed the same, and had the same honourable thoughts of other virtues, they also would be as national as these. For faith will do its proper work: and when the understanding is peremptorily and fully determined upon the persuasion of a proposition, if the will should then dissent and choose the contrary, it were unnatural and monstrous, and possibly no

man ever does so; for that men do things without reason and against their conscience, is because they have put out their light, and discourse their wills into the election of a sensible good, and want faith to believe truly all circumstances, which are necessary by way of predisposition for choice of the intellectual.

But when men's faith is confident, their resolution and actions are in proportion; for thus the faith of Mahometans makes them to abstain from wine for ever: and therefore if we had the Christian faith, we should much rather abstain from drunkenness for ever; It being an express rule apostolical, *'Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.*' The faith of the circumcellians made them to run greedily to violent and horrid deaths as willingly as to a crown: for they thought it was the King's high way to martyrdom. And there was never any man zealous for his religion, and of an imperious bold faith, but he was also willing to die for it; and therefore also by as much reason to live in it, and to be a strict observer of its prescriptions. And the stories of the strict sanctity, and prodigious sufferings, and severe disciplines, and expensive religion, and compliant and laborious charity of the primitive Christians, is abundant argument to convince us, that the faith of Christians is infinitely more fruitful, and productive of its univocal and proper issues, than the faith of heretics, or the false religions of misbelievers, or the persuasions of secular persons, or the spirit of antichrist; and therefore when we see men serving their prince with such difficult and ambitious services, because they believe him able to reward them, though of his will they are not so certain; and yet so supinely negligent, and incurious of their services to God, of whose power and will to reward us infinitely, there is certainty absolute and irrespective, it is certain probation, that we believe it not; for if we believe there is such a thing as hea-

ven, and that every single man's portion of heaven is far better than all the wealth of the world, it is morally impossible we should prefer so little before so great a profit.

I instance but once more. The faith of Abraham was instanced in the matter of confidence, or trust in the divine promises: and, he being the father of the faithful, we must imitate his faith by a clear dereliction of ourselves, and our own interests, and an entire confident relying upon the divine goodness in all cases of our needs or danger. Now, this is also a trial of the verity of our faith, the excellency of our condition, and what title we have to the glorious names of Christians, and faithful and believers. If our fathers, when we were in pupillage and minority, or a true and an able friend, when we were in need, had made promises to supply our necessities, our confidence was so great, that our care determined. It were also well, that we were as confident of God, and as secure of the event, when we had disposed ourselves to reception of the blessing, as we were of our friend or parents. We all profess that God is Almighty, that all his promises are certain, and yet when it comes to a pinch we find that man to be more confident, that hath ten thousand pounds in his purse, than he that reads God's promises over ten thousand times. "Men of a common spirit, (saith St. Chrysostome) of an ordinary sanctity, will not steal, or kill, or lie, or commit adultery; but it requires a rare faith, and a sublimity of pious affections to believe, that God will work a deliverance, which to me seems impossible." And indeed St. Chrysostome hit upon the right. He had need be a good man and love God well, that puts his trust in him. For those

\* *Clare cognoscere non adeo esse facile Deo soli re alia non assumpta credere propter eam quæ in nobis est cum mortali compage cognationem. Ab his autem purgari omnibus—uni autem Deo confidere, magni et cœlestis animi est opus, et ejus qui nullis amplius capiatur earum quas videmus rerum illecebris. Phil. Judæus. libr. Quis rerum Div. hæres.*

we love we are most apt to trust; <sup>a</sup> and although trust and confidence is sometimes founded upon experience, yet it is also begotten and increased by love, as often as by reason and discourse. And to this purpose it was excellently said by St. Basil: "That the knowledge which one man learneth of another is made perfect by continual use, and exercise, but that, which through the grace of God is engrafted in the mind of man, is made absolute by justice, gentleness, and charity." So that if you are willing even in death to confess not only the articles, but in affliction and death to trust the promises; if in the lowest nakedness of poverty you can cherish yourselves with expectation of God's promises and dispensation, being as confident of food and raiment, and deliverance or support, when all is in God's hand, as you are, when it is in your own; if you can be cheerful in a storm, smile when the world frowns, be content in the midst of spiritual desertions, and anguish of spirit, expecting all should work together for the best according to the promise; if you can strengthen yourselves in God, when you are weakest, believe when ye see no hope, and entertain no jealousies or suspicions of God, though you see nothing to make you confident; then, and then only, you have faith, which in conjunction with its other parts is able to save your souls. For in this precise duty of trusting God there are the rays of hope, and great proportions of charity and resignation.

The sum is, that pious and most Christian sentence of the author of the ordinary gloss: <sup>b</sup> "To believe in God through Jesus Christ is by believing to love him, to adhere to him, to be united to him by charity and obedience, and to be incorporated into Christ's mystical body in the communion of saints. I conclude

<sup>a</sup> "Εἰσι γὰρ πᾶς τὸτο τῇ τυραννίδι νόσημα, τοῖς φίλοις μὴ πεποιθέναι. *Æschy. Prometheus*

<sup>b</sup> Credere in Deum est credende amare, credendo diligere, credendo in eum ire, et membris ejus incorporari. *Gloss. ord. in Rom. 4.*

this with collation of certain excellent words of St. Paul, highly to the present purpose. *<sup>a</sup> Examine yourselves, brethren, whether ye be in the faith; Prove your own selves: Well, but how? Know you not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?* There is the touchstone of faith. If Jesus Christ dwells in us, then we are true believers; if he does not, we are reprobates, we have no 'faith: But how shall we know whether Christ be in us or no? St. Paul tells us that too. *<sup>b</sup> If Christ be in you, the body is dead by reason of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* That is the Christian's mark, and the characteristic of a true believer; *a death unto sin, and a living unto righteousness, a mortified body and a quickened spirit.* This is plain enough, and by this we see what we must trust to. A man of a wicked life does in vain hope to be saved by his faith, for indeed his faith is but equivocal and dead, which as to this purpose is just none at all; and therefore let him no more deceive himself. For (that I may still use the words of St. Paul,) *<sup>c</sup> This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.* For such, and such only in the great scrutiny for faith in the day of doom, shall have their portion in the bosom of faithful Abraham.

### THE PRAYER.

#### 1.

O ETERNAL God, fountain of all truth and holiness, in whom to believe is life eternal, let thy grace descend with a mighty power into my soul, beating down every strong hold, and vainer imagination, and bringing every proud thought, and my confident and ignorant understanding into the obedience of Jesus:

<sup>a</sup> 2 Cor. 13. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. 8. 10.

<sup>c</sup> Titus 2. 8.



Take from me all disobedience and refractoriness of spirit, all ambition and private and baser interests, remove from me all prejudice and weakness of persuasion, that I may wholly resign my understanding to the persuasions of Christianity; acknowledging thee to be the principle of truth, and thy word the measure of knowledge, and thy laws the rule of my life, and thy promises, the satisfaction of my hopes, and an union with thee to be the consummation of charity in the fruition of glory. Amen.

## II.

HOLY Jesus, make me to acknowledge thee to be my lord and master; and myself a servant and disciple of thy holy discipline and institution; let me love to sit at thy feet, and suck in with my ears and heart the sweetness of thy holy sermons. Let my soul be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, with a peaceable and docile disposition. Give me great boldness in the public confession of thy name and the truth of thy gospel, in despite of all hostilities and temptations; and grant I may always remember that thy name is called upon me, and I may so behave myself, that I neither give scandal to others, nor cause disreputation to the honour of religion, but that thou mayest be glorified in me, and I by thy mercies after a strict observance of all the holy laws of Christianity. Amen.

## III.

O HOLY and ever blessed Spirit, let thy gracious influences be the perpetual guide of my rational faculties. Inspire me with wisdom and knowledge, spiritual understanding and a holy faith, and sanctify my faith, that it may arise up to the confidence of hope, and the adherencies of charity, and be fruitful in a holy conversation; mortify in me all peevishness and

pride of spirit, all heretical dispositions, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine; that when the eternal Son of God, *the author and finisher of our faith*, shall come to make scrutiny and an inquest for faith, I may receive the promises laid up for them, that believe in the Lord Jesus, and wait for his coming in holiness and purity; to whom with the Father and thee, O blessed Spirit, be all honour and eternal adoration paid with all sanctity and joy and eucharist now and for ever. Amen.



## SECT. XI.

*Of Christ's going to Jerusalem to the Passover the first Time after his Manifestation, and what followed till the Expiration of the Office of John the Baptist.*

IMMEDIATELY after this miracle Jesus abode a few days in Capernaum, but because of the approach of the great feast of passover he ascended to Jerusalem, and the first public act of record, that he did, was an act of holy zeal and religion in behalf of the honor of the temple. For divers merchants and exchangers of money made the temple to be the market and the bank, and brought beasts thither to be sold for sacrifice against the great paschal solemnity. At the sight of which Jesus, being moved with zeal and indignation, made a whip of cords, and drove the beasts out of the temple, overthrew the accounting tables, and commanded *them that sold the doves to take them from thence*. For his anger was holy, and he would mingle no injury with it, and therefore the doves; which if let loose would be detrimental to the owners, he caused to be fairly removed; and published the religion of holy places, establishing their sacredness

for ever by his first gospel sermon, that he made at Jerusalem. *Take these things hence, make not my Father's house a house of merchandise, for it shall be called a house of prayer to all nations.* And being required to give a sign of his vocation, (for this being an action like the religion of the zealots among the Jews, if it was not attested by something extraordinary, might be abused into an excess of liberty) he only foretold the resurrection of his body after three days death, but he expressed it in the metaphor of the temple. *Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days;* he spake of the temple of his body, and they understood him of the temple at Jerusalem, and it was never rightly construed till it was accomplished.

At this public convention of the Jewish nation Jesus did many miracles, published himself to be the Messias, and persuaded many disciples, amongst whom was Nicodemus a doctor of the law, and a ruler of the nation; he came by night to Jesus and affirmed himself to be convinced by the miracles, which he had seen, *for no man could do those miracles except God be with him.* When Jesus perceived his understanding to be so far disposed, "he began to instruct him in the great secret and mysteriousness of regeneration, telling him that every production is of the same nature and condition with its parent; from flesh comes flesh and corruption, from the spirit comes spirit, and life and immortality. And nothing from a principle of nature could arrive to a supernatural end, and therefore the only door to enter into the kingdom of God was water by the maneduction of the Spirit, and by this regeneration we are put into a new capacity, of living a spiritual life in order to a spiritual and supernatural end."

This was strange philosophy to Nicodemus; but Jesus bade him not to wonder, for this is not a work of humanity but a fruit of God's spirit, and an issue of predestination. *For the spirit bloweth, where it listeth;* and is as the

wind, certain and notorious in the effects, but secret in the principle, and in the manner of production; and therefore this doctrine was not to be estimated by any proportions to natural principles or experiments of sense, but to the secrets of a new metaphysics, and abstracted, separate speculations. Then Christ proceeds in his sermon, telling him there are yet higher things for him to apprehend and believe; for this in respect of some other mysteriousness of his gospel, was but as earth in comparison of heaven. Then he tells of his own descent from heaven, foretells his death and ascension, and the blessing of redemption, which he came to work for mankind; he preaches of the love of the Father, the mission of the Son, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity. He upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the differences of a holy and a corrupt conscience, the shame and fears of one, the confidence and serenity of the other." And this is the sum of his sermon to Nicodemus, which was the fullest of mystery and speculation and abstracted senses of any that he ever made, except that which he made immediately before his passion, all his other sermons being more practical.

From Jerusalem Jesus goeth into the country of Judea, attended by divers disciples, whose understandings were brought into subjection and obedience to Christ, upon confidence of the divinity of his miracles. There his disciples did receive all comers and baptized them, as John at the same time did, and by that ceremony admitted them to the discipline and institution according to the custom of the doctors and great prophets among the Jews, whose baptizing their scholars, was the ceremony of their admission. As soon as John heard it, he acquitted himself in public by renewing his former testimony concerning Jesus, "affirming him to be the Messiah, and now the time was come, that Christ must increase, and the Baptist suffer diminution; for Christ came from above,

was above all, and the sum of his doctrine was that which he had heard and seen from the Father, whom God sent to that purpose, to whom God had set his seal, that he was true, who spake the words of God, whom the Father loved, to whom he gave the Spirit without measure, and into whose hands God had delivered all things; this was he, whose testimony the world received not: And that they might know not only what person they slighted, but how great salvation also they neglected, he sums up all his sermons, and finishes his mission with this saying, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

For now that the Baptist had fulfilled his office of bearing witness unto Jesus, God was pleased to give him his writ of ease, and bring him to his reward upon this occasion. John who had so learned to despise the world, and all its exterior vanities and impertinent relations, did his duty justly and so without respect of persons, that as he reproved the people for their prevarications, so he spared not Herod for his, but abstaining from all expresses of the spirit of scorn and asperity, mingling no discontents, interests nor mutinous intimations with his sermons, he told Herod *it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife.* For which sermon he felt the furies and malice of a woman's spleen, was cast into prison, and about a year after was sacrificed to the scorn and pride of a lustful woman, and her immodest daughter, being at the end of the second year of Christ's preaching beheaded by Herod's command, who would not retract his promise, because of his honour and a rash vow he made in the gaiety of his lust, and complacen-

\* John 3. 36.

<sup>b</sup> Montanistæ, et cum his Tertul. adv. Marcion. l. 4. c. 34. aiunt Philippum defunctum fuisse; et inde probare satagunt secundas nuptias illicitas esse. Sed hoc tam aperta fraude ut agens adv. Catholicos Tertillianus absteat abs tam iniqua recitatione. Marcioni autem Evangelium neganti hos obtrudere in facili erat.

cies of his riotous dancings. His head was brought up in a dish, and made a festival present to the young girl, who gave it to her mother, a cruelty that was not known among the barbarisms of the worst of people, to mingle banquetings with blood and sights of death; an insolency and inhumanity, <sup>a</sup> for which the Roman orators accused Q. Flaminus of treason, because to satisfy the wanton cruelty of Placentia he caused a condemned slave to be killed at supper; and which had no precedent but in the furies of Marius, who caused the head of the consul Antonius to be brought up to him in his feasts, which he handled with much pleasure and insolency.

But God's judgments, which sleep not <sup>b</sup> long, found out Herod, and marked him for a curse. For the the wife of Herod, who was the daughter of Aretas, a king of Arabia Petrea, being repudiated by paction with Herodias, provoked her father to commence a war with Herod; who prevailed against Herod in a great battle, defeating his whole army, and forcing him to an inglorious flight; which the Jews generally expounded to be a judgement on him for the unworthy and barbarous execution and murder of John the Baptist: God in his wisdom and severity making one sin to be the punishment of another, and neither of them both to pass without the signature of a curse. And Nicephorus reports, that the dancing daughter of Herodius passing over a frozen lake, the ice brake, and she fell up to the neck in water, and her head was parted from her body, by the violence of the fragments shaken by the water and its own fall, and so

<sup>a</sup> Senec. contriv. l. 5. Livius l. 39. Plu. in Mario.

<sup>b</sup> "Οτι δὲ θνητῶν μέμφεται τὰ θεοὶ ὅτι οὐκ ἐυδοῖ, ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ μετέρχεται τὴς μὴ δικαίας, περιφασιν ἐξαυσάτω. Εἰ γὰρ παραυλὴ ἦσαν αἱ τιμαίαι, πολλοὶ διὰ φόβον, καὶ οὐ δι' ἐυσεβῆ τρόπου θεῶν σέβοντ' ἂν νῦν δὲ τῆς τιμαρίας ἁπαλὴν ὕστερ, τῇ φύσει χροῦνται βροτοί. Ὅταν δὲ φαραδῶσιν, σφδίντες κακοὶ τίνοισι πῶνας ἐστέρισιν ἐν χρόνῳ.

perished; God having fitted a judgment to the analogy, and representment of her sin. \* Herodias herself, with her adulterous paramour Herod, was banished to Lyons, in France, by decree of the Roman senate, where they lived ingloriously and died miserably, so paying dearly for her triumphal scorn superadded to her crime of murder: for when she saw the head of the Baptist, which her daughter Salome had presented to her in a charger, she thrust the tongue through with a needle, as Fulvia had formerly done to Cicero. But herself paid the charges of her triumph.



Ad. SECT. II.

*Considerations upon the first Journey of the Holy Jesus to Jerusalem, when he whipped the Merchants out of the Temple.*

WHEN the feast came, and Jesus was ascended up to Jerusalem, the first place we find him in, is the Temple, where not only was the area and court of religion, but by occasion of public conventions, the most opportune scene for transaction of his commission and his Father's business. And those christians, who have been religious and affectionate even in the circumstances of piety, have taken this for precedent, and accounted it a good express of the regularity of their devotion and order of piety, at their first arrival to a city to pay their first visits to God, the next to his servant the president of religious rites; first they went into the church and worshipped, then to the angel of the church, to the bishop, and begged his blessing, and having thus commenced with the auspiciousness of religion, they had better hopes, their just affairs would

\* Jos. anti. l. 18. c. 7. lib. 1. hist. c. 20.

succeed prosperously, which after the rites of christian countries had thus been begun with devotion and religious order.

When the holy Jesus entered the temple, and espied a mart kept in the holy sept, a fair upon holy ground, he who suffered no transportations of anger in matters and accidents temporal, was borne high with an extasy of zeal, and according to the custom of the zealots of the nation, took upon him the office of a private infliction of punishment in the cause of God, which ought to be dearer to every single person than their own interest and reputation. What the exterminating angel did to Heliodorus, who came into the temple upon design of sacrilege, that the meekest Jesus did to them, who came with acts of profanation; he whipped them forth; and as usually good laws spring from ill manners, and excellent sermons are occasioned by men's iniquities, now also our great master upon this accident, asserted the sacredness of holy places in the words of a prophet, which now he made a lesson evangelical *My house shall be called an house of prayer to all nations.*

The beasts and birds there sold were brought for sacrifice, and the banks of money were for the advantage of the people that came from far, that their returns might be safe and easy, when they came to Jerusalem upon the employments of religion. But they were not yet fit for the temple, they who brought them thither purposed their own gain, and meant to pass them through an unholy usage, before they could be made anathemata, vows to God: and when religion is but the purpose at the second hand, it cannot allow a lay design, and make it fit to become a religious ministry, much less sanctify an unlawful action. When Rachel stole her father's gods, though possibly she might do it of zeal against her father's superstition, yet it was occasion of a sad accident to herself. For the Jews say that Rachel died in child birth of her second son because of that imprecation of Jacob,



<sup>a</sup> *With whomsoever thou findest thy gods let him not live.* Saul pretended sacrifice when he spared the fat cattle of Amalek, and Micah was zealous, when he made him an ephod and a teraphim, and meant to make himself an image for religion, when he stole his mother's money: but these are colours of religion, in which not only the world, but ourselves also are deceived by a latent purpose, which we are willing to cover with a remote design of religion, lest it should appear unhandsome in its own dressing. Thus some believe a covetousness allowable, if they greedily heap treasure with a purpose to build hospitals or colleges; and sinister acts of acquiring church livings are not so soon condemned, if the design be to prefer an able person; and actions of revenge come near to piety if it be to the ruin of an ungodly man; and indirect proceedings made sacred if they be for the good of the holy cause. This is profaning the temple with beasts brought for sacrifices, and dishonours God by making himself accessory to his own dishonour as far as lies in them, for it disserves him with a pretence of religion: and but that our hearts are deceitful we should easily perceive, that the greatest business of the letter is written in postscript; the great pretence is the least purpose, and the latent covetousness or revenge, or the secular appendix is the main engine to which the end of religion is made but instrumental and pretended. But men, when they sell a mule, use to speak of the horse that begat him, not of the ass that bore him.

The holy Jesus made a whip of cords to represent and to chastise the implications and enfoldings of sin and the cords of vanity. First, There are some sins that of themselves are a whip of cords, those are the crying sins, that by their degree and malignity speak loud for vengeance, or such as have great disreputation, and are accounted the basest issues of a captive

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 31. 32.

disposition, or such which are unnatural and unusual, or which by public observation are marked with the signature of divine judgements. Such are murder, oppression of widows and orphans, detaining the labourer's hire, lusts against nature, parricide, treason, betraying a just trust in great instances and base manners, lying to a king, perjury in a priest, these carry Cain's mark upon them, or Judas his sting, or Manasses sorrow, unless they be made impudent by the spirit of obduration. Secondly, But there are some sins, that bear shame upon them and are used as correctives of pride and vanity, and if they do their cure, they are converted into instruments of good; by the great power of the divine grace; but if the spirit of the man grows impudent and hardened against the shame, that which commonly follows is the worst string of the whip, a direct consignation to a reprobate spirit. Thirdly, Other sins there are, for the chastising of which Christ takes the whip into his own hand, and there is much need; when sins are the customs of a nation, and marked with no exterior disadvantage, or have such circumstances of encouragement that they are unapt to disquiet a conscience, or make our beds uneasy till the pillows be softened with penitential showers. In both these cases the condition of a sinner is sad and miserable. For it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, his hand is heavy and his sword is sharp, and pierces to the dividing the marrow and the bones; and he that considers the distance infinite between God and us, must tremble when he remembers, that he is to feel the issues of that anger, which he is not certain whether or no it will destroy him infinitely and eternally. Fourthly, But if the whip be given into our hands, that we become executioners of the divine wrath, it is sometimes worse, for we seldom strike ourselves for emendation, but add a sin to sin, till we perish miserably and inevitably. God scourges us often into repentance, but when a sin is the whip of another sin, the

rod is put into our hands, who like blind men strike with a rude and undiscerning hand, and because we love the punishment, do it without intermission or choice, and have no end but ruin.

When the holy Jesus had whipped the merchants in the temple, they took away all the instruments of their sin. For a judgement is usually the commencement of repentance; love is the last of graces, and seldom at the beginning of a new life, but is reserved to the perfections and ripeness of a christian. We begin in fear, *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; When he smote them then they turned, and enquired early after God;”* and afterwards the impresses of fear continue like a hedge of thorns about us, to restrain our dissolutions within the awfulness of the Divine Majesty, that it may preserve what was from the same principle begun. This principle of their emendation was from God, and therefore innocent and holy, and the very purpose of divine threatenings is, that upon them as upon one of the great hinges, the piety of the greatest part of men should turn; and the effect was answerable; but so are not the actions of all those who follow this precedent in the tract of the letter. For indeed there have been some reformatiions, which have been so like this, that the greatest alteration which hath been made, was that they carried all things out of the temple, the money, and the tables, and the sacrifice, and the temple itself went at last. But these men’s scourge is to follow after, and Christ, the prince of the catholic church will provide one of his own contexture, more severe than the stripes which Heliodorus felt from the infliction of the exterminating angel. But the holy spirit of God, by making provision against such a reformation, hath prophetically declared the aptnesses which are in pretences of religious alterations to degenerate into sacrilegious desires. *“Thou that*

*abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?* In this case there is no amendment, only one sin resigns to another, and the person still remains under its power and the same dominion.

### THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL Jesu, thou bright image of thy Father's glories, whose light did shine to all the world, when thy heart was inflamed with zeal and love of God, and of religion, let a coal from thine altar, fanned with the wings of the holy dove, kindle in my soul such holy flames, that I may be zealous of thy honour and glory, forward in religious duties, earnest in their pursuit, prudent in their managing, ingenuous in my purposes, making my religion to serve no end, but of thy glories, and the obtaining of thy promises; and so sanctify my soul and my body, that I may be a holy temple, fit and prepared for the inhabitation of thy ever blessed Spirit, whom grant, that I may never grieve by admitting any impure thing to desecrate the place, and unhallow the courts of his abode; but give me a pure soul in a chaste and healthful body, a spirit full of holy simplicity, and designs of great ingenuity, and perfect religion, that I may intend what thou commandest, and may with proper instruments prosecute what I so intend, and by thy aids may obtain the end of my labours, the rewards of obedience and holy living, even the society and inheritance of Jesus in the participation of the joys of thy temple, where thou dwellest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, O eternal Jesus. Amen.

## DISCOURSE VIII.

*Of the Religion of Holy Places.*

THE holy Jesus brought a divine warrant for his zeal. The selling sacrifices, and the exchange of money, and every lay employment did violence and dishonour to the temple, which was hallowed to ecclesiastical ministries, and set apart for offices of religion, for the use of holy things, for it was God's house, and so is every house by public designation separate for prayer, or other uses of religion, it is God's house, [My house] God hath a propriety in it, and had set his mark on it, even his own name. And therefore it was in the Jews' idiom of speech called *the mountain of the Lord's house*, and *the house of the Lord*, by David frequently; God had put his name into all places appointed for solemn worship, \* *In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and bless thee.* For God, who was never visible to mortal eye, was pleased to make himself presential by substitution of his name; that is, in certain places he hath appointed, that his name shall be called upon, and by promising and imparting such blessings, which he hath made consequent to the invocation of his name, hath made such places to be a certain determination of some special manner of his presence. For God's name is not a distinct thing from himself, not an idea, and it cannot be put into a place in literal signification; the expression is to be resolved into some other sense; God's name is that, whereby he is known, by which he is invoked, that which is the most immediate publication of his essence, nearer than which we cannot go unto him; and because God is essentially present in all places, when he makes himself present in one place more than another, it cannot be understood to any other purpose, but that in such places he gives spe-

\* Exod. 20. 24.

cial blessings, and graces, or that in those places he appoints his name, that is, himself specially, to be invoked.

So that when God puts his name in any place by a special manner, it signifies, that there himself is in that manner; but in separate and hallowed places God hath expressed, that he puts his name, with a purpose it should be called upon, therefore in plain signification, it is thus; in consecrate places God himself is present to be invoked; that is, there he is most delighted to hear the prayers we make unto him. For all the expressions of scriptures, of *God's houses, the tabernacle of God, God's dwellings, putting his name there, his sanctuary*; are resolved into that saying of God to Solomon, who prayed, that he would hear the prayers of necessitous people in that place: God granting the request expressed it thus, *"I have sanctified the house which thou hast built: that is, the house which thou hast designed for my worship, I have designed for your blessing; what you have dedicated I have accepted; what you have consecrated I have hallowed; I have taken it to the same purpose to which your desires and designation pretended it in your first purposes and expence. So that since the first purpose of man in separating places of worship is, that thither by order, and with convenience, and in communities of men God may be worshiped and prayed unto, God having declared that he accepts of such separate places to the same purposes, says that there he will be called upon, that such places shall be places of advantage to our devotions in respect of human order and divine acceptance and benediction.*

Now these are therefore God's houses, because they were given by men and accepted by God, for the services of God and the offices of religion. And this is not the effect, or result of any distinct covenant God hath made with man in any period of the world, but it is merely a favour of God either hearing the prayer of

dedication, or complying with human order or necessities. For there is nothing in the covenant of Moses' law, that by virtue of special stipulation makes the assignment of a house for the service of God to be proper to Moses' rite. 'Not only because God had special memorials and determinations of this manner of his presence before Moses' law, as at Bethel, where Jacob laid the first stone of the church, (nothing but a stone was God's memorial) and the beginning and first rudeness of a temple; but also because after Moses' law was given, as long as the nation was ambulatory, so were their places and instruments of religion; and although the ark was not confined to a place till Solomon's time, yet God was pleased in this manner to confine himself to the ark; and in all places wherever his name was put, even in synagogues and oratories and threshing floors, when they were hallowed with an altar and religion, thither God came, that is, there he heard them pray, and answered and blessed accordingly, still in proportion to that degree of religion, which was put upon them; and those places, when they had once entertained religion, grew separate and sacred for ever; for therefore David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah, that it might never return to common use any more; for it had been no trouble or inconvenience to Araunah to have used his floor for one solemnity; but he offered to give it, and David resolved to buy it, because it must of necessity be aliened from common uses to which it could never return any more, when once it had been the instrument of a religious solemnity; and yet this was no part of Moses' law, that every place of a temporary sacrifice should be holy for ever. David had no guide in this, but right reason and the religion of all the world. For such things which were great instruments of public ends, and things of highest use, were also in all societies of men of greatest honour, and immured by reverence and the security of laws.

<sup>a</sup> Nec fortuitum spernere cespitem leges sinebant, oppida publico sumptu iubentes, et Decorum templa novo decorare saxo. *Hor. l. 2. od. 17.*

For honour and reputation is not a thing inherent in any creature, but depends upon the estimate of God or men, who either in diffusion or representation become fountains of a derivative honour. Thus some men are honourable, that is, those who are fountains of honour in civil account, have commanded that they shall be honoured. And so places and things are made honourable; that as honourable persons are to be distinguished from others by honourable usages and circumstances proper to them, so also should places and things (upon special reason separate) have an usage proper to them, when by a public instrument or minister they are so separated. No common usage then, something proper to tell what they are, and to what purposes they are designed, and to signify their separation and extraordinariness. Such are the person of the prince, the archives and records of a kingdom, the walls and great defences of the imperial city, the eagles and ensigns of war amongst the Romans, and above all things, though not above all persons, the temples and altars, and all the instruments of religion. And there is much reason in it. For thus a servant of a king, though his employment be naturally mean, yet is more honourable, because he relates to the most excellent person; and therefore much more those things which relate to God. And though this be the reason why it should be so, yet for this and other reasons, they that have power, that is, they who are acknowledged to be the fountains, and the channels of honour, I mean the supreme power, and public fame have made it actually to be so. For whatsoever all wise men, and all good men, and all public societies, and all supreme authority hath commanded to be honoured, or revered, that is honourable and reverend, and this honour and reverence is to be expressed according to the customs of the nation, and instruments of honour proper to the nature of the thing or person respectively. Whatsoever is esteemed so, is so; because honour and noble separations are



relative actions and terms, creatures and productions of fame, and the voice of princes and the sense of people; and they who will not honour those things or those persons which are thus decreed to be honourable, have no communications with the civilities of humanity, or the guises of wise nations: They do not *give honor to whom honor belongs*. Now that which in civil account we call [honourable] the same in religious account we call [sacred] for by both these words we mean things or persons made separate and retired from common opinion, and vulgar usages by reason of some excellency really inherent in them (such as are excellent men) or for their relation to excellent persons, or great ends, public or religious, <sup>a</sup> (and so servants of princes, and ministers of religion, and its instruments and utensils are made honorable, or sacred) and the expressions of their honour are all those actions and usages which are contrary to despatch, and above the usage of vulgar things or places. <sup>b</sup> Whatsoever is sacred, that is, honourable for its religious relation; and whatsoever is honourable, that also is sacred (that is, separate from the vulgar usages and account) for its civil excellency or relation. The result is this, that when public authority or the consent <sup>c</sup> of a nation hath made any place sacred for the uses of religion, we must esteem it sacred, just as we esteem persons honourable who are so honoured. And thus are judges and the very places of judicature, the king's presence chamber, the chair of state, the senate-house, the royal ensigns of a prince, whose gold and purple in its natural capacity hath in it no more dignity than the money of the bank, or the cloth of the mart; but it hath much more for its sig-

<sup>a</sup> Religiosum est quod propter sanctitatem aliquam remotum ac sepositum à nobis est: verbum à relinquendo dictum, tanquam ceremoniæ à carendo. *Gel. lib. 4. c. 9.*

<sup>b</sup> Ceremoniæ Deorum sanctitas regum. *Jul. Cæsar apud Sueton.*

<sup>c</sup> Ex lege cujusque civitatis jubentur Dii coli. *Dictum 5. Sapient. apud Xenophon.*  
 ἐπείδειν δὲ ἔχειν καὶ τὰ πάτρια ἐνάγκαις προσήκει. *Epict. c. 38.*

nification and relative use. And it is certain, these things whose excellency depends upon their relation, must receive the degree of their honour in that proportion they have to their term and foundation; and therefore what belongs to God (as holy places of religion) must rise highest in this account: I mean higher than any other places. And this is besides the honour which God hath put upon them, by his presence and his title to them, which in all religions he hath signified to us.

Indeed among the Jews, as God had confined his church and the rites of religion to be used only in communion, and participation with the nation, so also he had limited his presence, and was more sparing of it, than in the time of the gospel his Son declared he would be. *It was said of old, that at Jerusalem men ought to worship,* that is, by a solemn, public and great address in the capital expresses of religion, in the distinguishing rites of liturgy, for else it had been no new thing. For in ordinary prayers God was then, and long before, pleased to hear Jeremy in the dungeon, Manasses in prison, Daniel in the lion's den, Jonas in the belly of the deep, and in the offices, yet more solemn in the proseuchæ, in the houses of prayer which the Jews had, not only in their dispersion, but even in Palestine for their diurnal and nocturnal offices: But when the holy Jesus had broken down the partition wall, then the most solemn offices of religion were as unlimited as their private devotions were before; for wherever a temple should be built, thither God would come, if he were worshipped spiritually, and in truth, that is, according to the rites of Christ, (who is grace and truth) and the dictate of the Spirit and analogy of the gospel. All places were now alike to build churches in, or memorials for God, God's houses. And that our blessed Saviour discourses of places of public worship to the woman of Samaria is notorious, because the whole question was concerning the great addresses of Moses' rites, whether

at Jerusalem or Mount Gerizim, which were the places of the right and the schismatical temple, the confinements of the whole religion : and in antithesis, Jesus said, nor here nor there shall be the solemnities of address to God, but in all places you may build a temple, and God will dwell in it.

And this hath descended from the first beginnings of religion down to the consummation of it in the perfections of the gospel. For the apostles of our Lord carried the offices of the gospel into the temple of Jerusalem, there they preached and prayed, and paid vows, but never, that we read of, offered sacrifice; which shews that the offices purely evangelical were proper to be done in any of God's proper places, and that thither they went not in compliance with Moses' rites, but merely for gospel duties, or for such offices, which were common to Moses and Christ, such as were prayers, and vows. While the temple was yet standing they had peculiar places for the assemblies of the faithful, when either by accident, or observation, or religion, or choice, they met regularly. And I instance in the house of John surnamed Mark, which as Alexander reports in the life of St. Barnabas, was consecrated by many actions of religion, by our blessed Saviour's eating the passover, his institution of the holy eucharist, his farewell sermon, and the apostles met there in the octaves of Easter, whither Christ came again, and hallowed it with his presence; and there to make up the relative sanctification complete, the Holy Ghost descended upon their heads in the feast of Pentecost, and this was erected into a fair fabric, and is mentioned as a famous church by St. Jerome, and V. Bede; in which, as Adrichomius adds, St. Peter preached that sermon, which was miraculously prosperous in the conversion of three thousand; there St. James, brother of our Lord, was consecrated first bishop of Jerusalem; St.

\* Epist. 27. Delectis Sanct. c. 3. In descript. Hieros. n. 6.

Stephen and the other six were there ordained deacons; there the apostles kept their first council, and compiled their creed, by these actions and their frequent conventions shewing the same reason, order and prudence of religion in assignation of special places of divine service, which were ever observed by all the nations, and religions, and wise men of the world. And it were a strange imagination to fancy, that in Christian religion there is any principle contrary to that wisdom of God, and all the world, which for order, for necessity, for convenience, for the solemnity of worship hath set apart places for God and for religion. Private prayer had always an unlimited residence and relation, even under Moses' law; but the public solemn prayer of sacrifice in the law of Moses was restrained to one temple; in the law of nature it was not confined to one, but yet determined to public and solemn places; and when the holy Jesus disparked the enclosures of Moses, we all returned to the permissions and liberty of the natural law, in which although the public and solemn prayers were confined to a temple, yet the temple was not confined to a place; but they might be any where, so they were at all; instruments of order, conveniencies of assembling, residences of religion; and God who always loved order, and was apt to hear all holy and prudent prayers (and therefore also the prayers of consecration) hath often declared that he loves such places, that he will dwell in them; not that they are advantages to him, but that he is pleased to make them so to us. And therefore all nations of the world built public houses for religion; and since all ages of the church<sup>a</sup> did so too, it had need be a strong and a convincing argument, that must shew they were deceived. And if any man list to be contentious, he

<sup>a</sup> Omnes ad orandum in idem loci convenite: sit una communis precatio, una mens, una spes in charitate, et fide inculpatâ in Christum Jesum, quo nihil est præstantius. Omnes velut unus quispiam ad templum Dei concurrite, velut ad unum altare, ad unum Jesum Christum, &c. *St. Ignat. ad Magnes.*

Thus<sup>a</sup> St. Paul reproved the Corinthians for despising the church of God by such uses, which were therefore unfit for Gods', because they were proper for their own, that is, for common houses. And although they were at first, and in the descending ages, so afflicted by the tyranny of enemies, that they could not build many churches, yet some they did, and the churches themselves suffered part of the persecution. For so Eusebius reports, that when under Severus and Gordianus, Philip and Galienus, the christian affairs were in a tolerable condition, they built churches in great number and expence. But when the persecution waxed hot under Dioclesian, down went the churches upon a design to extinguish, or disadvantage the religion. Maximinus gave leave to rebuild them. Upon which rescript (saith the story) the christians were overjoyed, and raised them up to an incredible height, and<sup>b</sup> incomparable beauty. This was christian religion then, and so it hath continued ever since, and unless we should have new reason and new revelation, it must continue so till our churches are exchanged for thrones, and our chapels for seats placed before the Lamb, in the eternal Temple of celestial Jerusalem.

And to this purpose it is observed, that the holy Jesus first ejected the beasts of sacrifice out of the temple, and then proclaimed the place holy, and the scene of representing prayers, which in type intimates the same thing which is involved in the expression of the next words, *My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations*; now and for ever, to the Jews and to the Gentiles in all circumstances and variety of time and nation, God's houses are holy in order to holy uses; the time as unlimited as the nations were indefinite and universal; which is the more observ-

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 11. 22.

<sup>b</sup> Καὶ δὴ διήλθομεν Σιδηρίας τε πύλας ἢ χαλκίους ὁδοὺς, ἀναβάθρας δὲ ἡλείας περικυκλωμένοι, ἐς χρυσόροφον οἶκον ἀνήλθομεν, ὅν Ὁμοῦ τὸν Μενέλαον φησί. Lucian. Philophaet. de templo Christiano.

able, because it was of the outward courts, not whether Moses' rites alone were admitted, but the natural devotion of Jews, and Gentile proselytes, \* that Christ affirmed it to be holy, to be the house of God, and the place of prayer: so that the religion of public places of prayer, is not a rite of Levi, but a natural and prudent circumstance, and advantage of religion in which all wise men agree, who therefore must have some common principle with influence upon all the world, which must be the univocal cause of the consent of all men; which common principle must either be a dictate of natural or prime reason, or else some tradition from the first parents of mankind, which because it had order in it, beauty, religion, and confirmation from heaven, and no reason to contest against it, it hath surprized the understanding and practises of all nations. And indeed we find, that even in paradise God had that, which is analogical to a church, a distinct place, where he manifested himself present in proper manner. For Adam and Eve, when they had sinned, *hid themselves from the presence of the Lord*; and this was the word in all descent of the church, for the being of God in holy places, the presence of the Lord was there. And probably when Adam from this intimation, or a greater direction had taught Cain and Able to offer sacrifice to God *in a certain place, where they were observed of each in their several offerings*, it became one of the rules of religion, which was derived to their posterity by tradition, the only way they had to communicate the dictates of divine commandment.

There is no more necessary to be added in behalf of holy places, and to assert them into the family and relatives of religion; our estimate and deportment

\* Quod ab omnibus gentibus observatum est, id non nisi à Deo sancitum est.  
Socrates.

Χρόνῳ κρατηθὲν ἔσθ' ἄν γένος ἢ θρησκείας ἰσχυρότερον. Nicet. Τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσφα-  
λέστατα: τάς τε οὐσίας ἀν τοῖς παρῶσιν ἔθεσι, καὶ νόμοις ἢ καὶ χεῖρῳ ἢ, ἥκιστα διαφύλα-  
σσεσθαι. Alcibiad. apud Thucyd.

towards them is matter of practice, and therefore of proper consideration. To which purpose I consider, that holy places being the residence of God's name upon earth, there where he hath put it, that by fiction of law it may be the <sup>a</sup> sanctuary and the last resort in all calamities and need, God hath sent his agents to possess them in person for him. Church and oratories are regions and courts of angels, and they are there not only to minister to the saints, but also they possess them in the right of God. There they are: so the greatest and prince of spirits tells us, the Holy Ghost. <sup>b</sup> *I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and his train filled the temple, about it stood the seraphim; that was God's train, and therefore holy David knew that his addresses to God were in the presence of angels: <sup>c</sup> I will praise thee with my whole heart; before the gods will I sing praise unto thee:* before the angels, so it is in the Septuagint. <sup>d</sup> And that we might know, where or how the kingly worshipper would pay this adoration, he adds; *I will worship towards thy holy temple;* and this was so known by him, that it became expressive of God's manner of presence in heaven. <sup>e</sup> *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, and the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place;* God in the midst of angels, and the angels in the midst of the holy place; and God in heaven in the midst of that holy circle, as sure as he is amongst angels, in the recesses of his sanctuary. Were the rudiments of the law worthy of an attendance of angels, and are the memorials of the Gospel destitute of so brave a retinue? Did the beatified spirits wait upon the types, and do they decline the office at the ministration of the substance? Is the nature of man made worse since the incarnation of the Son of God, and the angels purchased an

<sup>a</sup> Psal. 27. 4, 5. 6.    <sup>b</sup> Isa. 6. 1.    <sup>c</sup> Psal. 139. 1, 2.

<sup>e</sup> 'Εναντίον ἀγγέλων, LXX. μαρτύρεται δὲ ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῶν τὰ ἁγία ὃ τὰς ἱερὰς ἀγγέλους τῷ Θεῷ. *Orat. Agrip. apud Joseph. l. c. 16. de bello Judai.*

<sup>d</sup> Psal. 68. 17.

exemption from their ministry, since Christ became our brother? We have little reason to think so: and therefore St. Paul still makes use of the argument to press women to modesty and humility in churches, because of the angels. And upon the same stock St. Chrysostome chides the people of his diocese for walking, and laughing, and prating in churches:—  
 “The church is not a shop of manufactures, or merchandize, but the place of angels, and of archangels, the court of God, and the image or representment of heaven itself.

For if we consider that christianity is something more than ordinary that there are mysteries in our religion, and in none else, that God’s angels are ministering spirits for our good, and especially about the conveyances of our prayers; either we must think very low of christianity, or that greater things are in it, than the presence of angels in our churches; and yet, if there were no more, we should do well to behave ourselves there with the thoughts and apprehensions of heaven about us; always remembering, that our business there is an errand of religion, and God is the object of our worshippings, and therefore although by our weakness we are fixed in the lowness of men, yet because God’s infinity is our object, it were very happy, if our actions did bear some few degrees of a proportionable and commensurate address.

Now that the angels are there in the right of God, and are a manner, and an exhibition of the divine presence, is therefore certain, because whenever it is said in the Old Testament, that God, appeared, it was by an angel; and the law itself, in the midst of all the glorious terrors of its manifestation, *was ordained by angels, and a word spoken by angels*, and yet God is said to have descended upon the mount, and in the

<sup>h</sup> Homil. 16. in 1 Cor. & de sacer. τότε ὁ ἄγγελος παρεγένετο τῷ ἱερεῖ, &c.

St. Ambros. in c. 1. Lucae, Non dubites assistere Angelum quando Christus assistit, Christus immolatur. R. Canutus in leg. Eccl. c. 4. Angeli si quidem circumfusi sacra custodiunt, & divina freti potentia sacerdoti subserviunt.



greatest glory that ever shall be revealed till the consummation of all things; the instrument of the divine splendour is the apparition of angels; for when the Holy Jesus shall come in the glory of his Father, it is added by way of explication, that is, with an host of angels.

The result is, those words of God to his people, <sup>a</sup> *Reverence my sanctuary.* For what God loves in an especial manner, it is most fit we should esteem accordingly. <sup>b</sup> *God loves the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.* The least turf of hallowed glebe is, with God himself of more value than all the champaigne of common possession, it is better in all senses. <sup>c</sup> *The temple is better than gold,* said our blessed Saviour, and therefore it were well we should do that which is expressed in the command of giving reverence to it, for we are too apt to pay undue devotions to gold. Which precept the holiest of that nation expressed by worshipping towards the sanctuary, by <sup>d</sup> pulling off their shoes when they went into it, by inaking it the determination of their religious addresses, by falling down low upon the earth in their accesses, by opening their windows towards it in their private devotions, by calling it the glory of their nation: as is certain in the instances of David, Daniel, and the wife of Phinehas. I shall not need to say, that the devouter christians in the first ages did worship God with solemnities of address, whenever they

<sup>a</sup> Levit. 19. 30.    <sup>b</sup> Psal. 87. 2.    <sup>c</sup> Mat. 23. 17.

<sup>d</sup> Ἀνυπόδητοι δύνει ἢ προσκυνοῦν. dixit Pythagoras. Maimonides ait nefas fuisse Judæis calceatis ingredi sanctuarium, aut vestitis vestibus opificum. Justin. Martyr. ait Gentes in sacris ἀπολύεσθαι. Intramus templa compositi, ad sacrificum accessuri vultum submittimus, togam adducimus, in omne argumentum modestiæ signimur, Sen. Extemplò illò te ducam ubi non despuas. Nævius in Triphallo. Quo ore Thurarius Christianus si per templa transibit, fumantes aras despuet? Tert. de Idol. c. 1. Council Grangr. cap. 5. 1 Cor. 14. 25. Περὶ γὰρ τὴν ἐκατόμβαν δύσαντα μὴ μὲν εὐσεβὺς γνῶμης καὶ πυνθανόμενον πᾶς εἴη προσδεδεγμένος τὰ παρ' αὐτῷ δῶρα ἀποκρίνεται [πύθι]· Ἀλλὰ μοι εὐαδὲ χόνηδ' ἀγαλλίῃ Ερμιονή· τὸ εὐτελὲς αὐτὸν προκρίνον τῆς τοσαύτης πολυτελείας, ὅτι δὲ θεοσεβείας κεκόσμητο· μὲν' αὐτῆς γὰρ πάντα θεοφιλή, καὶ ἀνευ ταύτης ὕδεν θεῷ φίλον ἂν ποτε γένοιτο. Hieroc. in Pyth.

Plebs devota veni, perque hæc commercia disce  
Terreno censu regna superna peti.

Simplicius P. in expositione Ecclesiæ S. Andreæ in Roma.

entered into their oratories. It was a civility Jesus commanded his disciples to use to common houses, *When ye enter into a house salute it.* I suppose he means the dwellers in it; and it is certain whatever those devout people did in their religious approaches, they designed it to God, who was the major domo, the master of those assemblies; and thus did the convinced christian in St. Paul's discourse, when he came into the church where they were prophesying in a known language, *The secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so falling down on his face he will worship God.*

It was no unhandsome expression of reverencing God's sanctuary, that pious people ever used in bestowing costly and fair ornaments upon it, for so all the christians did; as soon as themselves came from contempt and scorn, they raised christian oratories to an equal portion of their honour; and by this way they thought they did honour to God, who was the Numen of the place. Not that a rich house or costly offertory is better in respect of God, for to him all is alike, save that in equal abilities our devotion is distinguished by them; and be the offering never so contemptible, it is a rich devotion, that gives the best we have, because although if all the wealth of the Levant were united into a present, it were short of God's infinity: yet such an offertory, or any best we have, makes demonstration, that if we had an offering infinitely better, we should give it to express our love, and our belief of God's infinite merit and perfection. And therefore let not the widow's two mites become a precedent to the instance, and value of our donation; and because she who gave no more, was accepted, think that two farthings is as fit to be cast into the corban as two thousand pound. For the reason why our blessed Saviour commended the widow's oblation was for the greatness of it, not the smallness, *she gave all she had, even all her living,* therefore she was accepted. And indeed since God gives to us more

than enough, beyond our necessities, much for our conveniency, much for our ease, much for repute, much for public compliances, for variety, for content, for pleasure, for ornament, we should deal unworthily with God Almighty, if we limit and restrain our returns to him, by confining them within the narrow bounds of mere necessity. <sup>a</sup> Certainly beggerly services and cheapness is not more pleasing to God, than a rich and magnificent address. To the best of essences the best of presents is most proportionable, and although the service of the soul, and spirit is most delectable and esteemed by God, yet because our souls are served by things perishing and material and we are of that constitution, that by the body we serve the spirit, and by both we serve God, as the spirit is chiefly to be offered to God, because it is better than the body, so the richest oblation is the best in an equal power, and the same person; because it is the best of things material: and although it hath not the excellency of the spirit, it hath an excellency that a cheap oblation hath not, and besides the advantage of the natural value, it can no otherwise be spoiled than a meaner offering may, it is always capable of the same commendation from the piety of the presenter's spirit, and may be as much purified, and made holy as the cheaper or the more contemptible. God hath no where expressed, that he accepts of a cheaper offering, but when we are not able to give him better. When the people brought offerings more than enough for the tabernacle, Moses restrained their forwardness by saying it was enough, but yet commended the disposition highly, and wished it might be perpetual: but God chid the people, when they let his house lye waste without

<sup>a</sup> Delicta Majorum immeritus lues Romanae, donec templa refeceris, ædosque labentes Deorum, & Fœda nigro simulachra fumo. *Hor. l. 3. od. 6.* Impiecatitis notatur Zeno quòd dixerit *ἡγάθην θεῶν μὴ διανομέσθην*. Et Barbararum Gentium mores Diis ponere in lucis, nemoribus, & montium jugis, eò quòd Deos templis includendos non esse dixerant.

reparation of its decaying beauty; and therefore sent famines upon the land, and a curse into their estate, because they would not by giving a portion to religion sanctify and secure all the rest. For the way for a man to be a saver by his religion is to deposit one part of his estate in the temple, and one in the hands of the poor, for these are God's treasury, and stewards respectively; and this is laying up treasures in heaven; and besides, that it will procure blessing to other parts, it will help to save our souls, and that is good husbandry, that is worth the saving.

For I consider that those riches and beauties in churches and religious solemnities which add nothing to God, add much devotion to us, and much honour and efficacy to devotion. <sup>a</sup> For since impression is made upon the soul by the intervening of corporal things, our religion and devotion of the soul receives the addition of many degrees by such instruments. Inso-much that we see persons of the greatest fancy, and such who are most pleased with outward fairnesses are most religious. Great understandings make religion lasting and reasonable, but great fancies make it more scrupulous, strict, operative, and effectual: And therefore it is strange, that we shall bestow such great expences to make our own houses convenient and delectable, that we may entertain ourselves with complacency and appetite, and yet think that religion is not worth the ornament, nor our fancies fit to be carried into the choice, and prosecution of religious actions with sweetness, entertainments, and fair propositions. If we say that God is not the better for a rich house, or a costly service; we may also remember, that neither are we the better for rich clothes; and the sheep will keep us as modest, as warm, and as clean, as the silk-worm; and a gold chain, or a carkenet of pearl does no more contribute to our happiness, than it does to the service of religion. For if

<sup>a</sup> τὰ αἰσθῆσει καλὰ ἔννοήσει καλῶν εἰκόνες. *Philo.*

we reply, that they help to the esteem, and reputation of our persons, and the distinction of them from the vulgar, from the servants of the lot of Issachar; and add reverence and veneration to us; how great a shame is it, if we study by great expences to get reputation, and accidental advantages to ourselves, and not by the same means to purchase reverence and esteem to religion? since we see that religion amongst persons of ordinary understandings receives as much external accidental advantages by the accession of exterior ornaments and accommodation, as we ourselves can; by rich clothes, and garments of wealth, ceremony and distinction. And as in princes courts the reverence to princes is quickened and encreased by an outward state and glory: so also it is in the service of God; although the understandings of men are no more satisfied by a pompous magnificence, than by a cheap plainness, yet the eye is, and the fancy, and the affections, and the senses, that is, many of our faculties are more pleased with religion, when religion by such instruments and conveyances pleases them. And it was noted by Sozomen concerning Valens the Arrian emperor, that when he came to Cesarea in Cappadocia he praised St. Basil their bishop, and upon more easy terms revoked his banishment; <sup>a</sup> because he was a grave person, and did his holy offices with reverent and decent addresses, and kept his church assemblies with much ornament and solemnity.

But when I consider that saying of St. Gregory, <sup>b</sup> that the church is heaven within the tabernacle, heaven dwelling among the sons of men, and remember that God hath studded all the firmament, and paved it with stars, because he loves to have his house beautiful, and highly representative of his glory, I see no reason we should not do as Apollinaris says God

<sup>a</sup> Quòd cum tanto ornatu, tamque decenter sacerdotio fungeretur conchitusque ageret.

<sup>b</sup> Εκκλησία ἐστὶν ὕψους ἐπίγειον.

does, "In earth do the works of heaven." <sup>a</sup> For he is the God of beauties, and perfections, and every excellency in the creature is a portion of influence from the divinity, and therefore is the best instrument of conveying honor to him, who made them for no other end, but for his own honor, as the last resort of all other ends for which they were created.

But the best manner to reverence the sanctuary is by the continuation of such actions, which gave it the first title of holiness. <sup>b</sup> *Holiness becometh thine house for ever*, said David, *sancta sanctis*, holy persons, and holy rites in holy places; that as it had the first relation of sanctity by the consecration of a holy and reverend minister, and president of religion, so it may be perpetuated in holy offices, and receive the daily consecration by the assistance of sanctified, and religious persons. *Foris canes*, dogs and criminal persons are unfit for churches; the best ornament and beauty of a church is a holy priest and a sanctified people. <sup>c</sup> For since angels dwell in churches, and God hath made his name to dwell there too, if there also be a holy people, that there be saints as well as angels, it is a holy fellowship, and a blessed communion: But to see a devil there, would scare the most confident and bold fancy, and disturb the good meeting; and such is every wicked and graceless person: *Have I not chosen twelve of you, and one of you is a*

<sup>a</sup> ἔργον τὸ μέγα, ἢ καλὸν τίμιον τῷ γὰρ τοῦτο ἡ θεοπία δαυμασθῇ. Arist.

<sup>b</sup> Gravitas honesta, diligentia attonita, cura sollicita, apparitio devota, et processio modesta. Tertul. de præscript. Confluunt ad ecclesiam casta celebritas honesta utriusque sexus discretionem. St. Aug. l. 2. c. 28, de civit. Dei.

<sup>c</sup> Τὰ γὰρ καὶ ἀπὸ πάσης περιστάσεως τι ἑταίρον ἔστιν ἡ διδασκαλία ἡ φρονήσις ἢ ἀνδρεία, ἢ σπουδή, ἢ δικαιοσύνη, εὐσεβείας τε ἢ ὁσιότητος, ἢ συμπόσης ἀρετῆς; Philo. legat. ad Cajum. Μόνον γὰρ διὰ τιμῆς ὁ περιουσιάζων ἑαυτὸν προσάγει, ἢ ἀγαθὰ θεῶν ταλαιῶν τὴν ἐαυτοῦ ψυχὴν, ἢ τὰν εἰς ἐνδοξίαν, τῷ θεῷ φιλῶς τὸν ἐαυτοῦ παρρησιαζόμενον. Hiero in Pyth. θυγῆς κατὰ τὸν τόπον δικαιοτέρον ἐπὶ γῆς θεὸς ἢ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ἢ ὁ πῦρ συμπίπτει, λέγειν, ἡ εὐσεβείαν δὲ βροτοῖς γάρυμαί τῶσον, ὅσον ἀνθρώπων. Idem.

Quia demus id superis——

Compositum jus, fasque animis, sanctosque recessus  
Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto?

Hoc cedo ut admoveam templis, et farre litabo.

*devil?* An evil soul is an evil spirit, and such are no good ornaments for temples; and it is a shame that a goodly Christian church should be like an Egyptian temple; without, goodly buildings; within a dog or a cat for the Deity they adore: It is worse, if in our addresses to holy places, and offices we bear our lusts under our garments. For dogs and cats are of God's making, but our lusts are not; but are God's enemies, and therefore besides the unholiness it is an affront to God to bring them along, and it defiles the place in a great degree.

For there is a defiling of a temple by insinuation of impurities, and another by direct and positive profanation, and a third by express <sup>a</sup> sacrilege; this defiles a temple to the ground. Every small sin is an unwelcome guest, and is a spot in those feasts of charity, which entertain us often in God's houses; but there are some (and all great crimes are such) which desecrate the place, unhallow the ground, as to our particulars, stop the ascent of our prayers, obstruct the current of God's blessing, turn religion into bitterness, and devotion into gall; such as are marked in scripture with a distinguishing character, as enemies to the peculiar dispositions of religion; and such are unchastity, which defiles the temples of our bodies; covetousness, which sets up an idol instead of God; and unmercifulness, which is a direct enemy to the mercies of God, and the fair return of our prayers. He that shews not the mercies of alms, of forgiveness and comfort, is forbid to hope for comfort, relief, or forgiveness from the hands of God. A pure mind is the best manner of worship, and the impurity of a crime is the greatest contradiction to the honour and religion of holy places; and therefore let us imitate the

<sup>a</sup> Animadverto graviorē existimari, qui delubris Deorum puram, castamque mentem, quam qui meditatam carmen intulerit. *Plin. sec. pan. Trajan.* Ἀγνὸν δὲ νοῦν οὐδέποτε εὐδαιμόνεια ἐμφαμεν. Ἀγνὸν δ' ἐστὶ φρονεῖν οὐκ ἔστι. *Porphyr. de non esu animal. l. 2.* Optimus animus pulcherrimus cultus, μὴ κατὰ τὸ κατὰ τὸ ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν εἶναι καὶ θεῶν, *Hiero.*

precedent of the most religious of kings *“ I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord, and so will I go to thine altar : always remembering those decretory and final words of St. Paul, “ He that defiles a temple, him will God destroy.*

### THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL God who dwellest not in temples made with hands, the heaven of heavens is not able to contain thee, and yet thou art pleased to manifest thy presence amongst the sons of men by special issues of thy favour and benediction ; make my body and soul to be a temple pure and holy, apt for the entertainments of the holy Jesus, and for the habitation of the Holy Spirit. Lord be pleased, with thy rod of paternal discipline to cast out all impure lusts, all worldly affections, all covetous desires from this thy temple, that it may be a place of prayer and meditation, of holy appetites and chaste thoughts, of pure intentions, and zealous desires of pleasing thee : that I may become also a sacrifice as well as a temple, eaten up with the zeal of thy glory, and consumed with the fire of love, that not one thought may be entertained by me but such as may be like perfume, breathing from the altar of incense ; and not a word may pass from me, but may have the accent of heaven upon it, and sound pleasantly in thy ears. O dearest God fill every faculty of my soul with impresses, dispositions, capacities, and aptnesses of religion, and do thou hallow my soul, that I may be possess'd with zeal and religious affections, loving thee above all things in the world, worshipping thee with the humblest adorations and frequent addresses, continually feeding upon the apprehensions of thy divine sweetness, and consideration of thy infinite excellencies and observations of thy righteous commandments, and the feast of a holy

<sup>a</sup> Psal. 26.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 3. 27.



conscience as an antepast of eternity, and consignation to the joys of heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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## SECT. XII.

*Of Jesus' Departure into Galilee; his Manner of Life, Miracles, and Preaching; his calling of Disciples; and what happened until the second Passover.*

WHEN Jesus understood that John was cast into prison, and that the Pharisees were envious, at him for the great multitudes of people that resorted to his baptism, which he ministered not in his own person, but by the deputation of his disciples, they finishing the ministration which himself began, (who, <sup>a</sup> as Eudius bishop of Antioch reports, baptized the blessed Virgin his mother and Peter only, and Peter baptized Andrew, Jame, and John, and they others,) he left Judea, and came into Galilee; and in his passage he must touch Sychar, a city of Samaria, where in the heat of the day, and the weariness of his journey he sat himself down upon the margin of Jacob's well; whither, when his disciples were gone to buy meat, a Samaritan woman cometh to draw water, of whom Jesus asked some to cool his thirst, and refresh his weariness.

Little knew the woman the excellency of the person that asked so small a charity; neither had she been taught, that a cup of cold water given to a disciple should be rewarded, <sup>b</sup> and much rather such a

<sup>a</sup> Euthim. c. 3. in Joan. apud Niceph. l. 2. c. 3. host.

<sup>b</sup> Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti,  
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.

present to the Lord himself. But she prosecuted the spite of her nation, and the interest and quarrel of the schism; and instead of washing Jesus's feet, and giving him drink, demanded, why he being a Jew should ask water of a Samaritan; for the Jews have no intercourse with the Samaritans.

The ground of the quarrel was this. In the sixth year of Hezekiah Salmanazar King of Assyria sacked Samaria, transported the Israelites to Assyria, and planted an Assyrian colony in the town and country, who by divine vengeance were destroyed by lions, which no power of man could restrain or lessen. The King thought the cause was their not serving the God of Israel according to the rites of Moses; and therefore sent a Jewish captive priest to instruct the rsmnant inhabitants in the Jewish religion; who so learned and practised it, that they still retained the superstition of the Gentile rites; till Manasses the brother of Jaddi the high priest at Jerusalem married the daughter of Sanballat, who was the governor under King Darius. Manasses being reproved for marrying a stranger, the daughter of an uncircumcised Gentile, and admonished to dismiss her, flies to Samaria, persuades his father-in-law to build a temple in Mount Gerizim, introduces the rites of daily sacrifice, and makes himself high priest, and began to pretend to be the true successor of Aaron, and commences a schism, in the time of Alexander the Great. From whence the question of religion grew so high, that it begat disaffections, anger, animosities, quarrels, bloodshed and murders, not only in Palestine, but wherever a Jew and a Samaritan had the ill fortune to meet: Such being the nature of men, that they think it the greatest injury in the world, when other men are not of their minds; and that they please God most when they are most furiously zealous; and no zeal better to be expressed than by hating all those whom they are pleased to think God hates. This schism was prosecuted with the greatest spite, that

ever any was, because both the people were much given to superstition; and this was helped forward by the constitution of their religion, consisting much in externals and ceremonials, and which they cared not much to hallow and make moral by the intertexture of spiritual senses and charity. \* And therefore the Jews called the Samaritans accursed, the Samaritans at the paschal solemnity would at midnight, when the Jews temple was open, scatter dead men's bones to profane and desecrate the place; and both would fight, and eternally dispute the question, sometimes referring it to arbitrators, and then the conquered party would decline the arbitration after sentence, (which they did at Alexandria before Ptolemeus Philometor, when Andronicus had by a rare and exquisite oration procured sentence against Theodosius and Sabbæus, the Samaritan advocates.) The sentence was given for Jerusalem, and the schism increased, and lasted till the time of our Saviour's conference with this woman.

And it was so implanted and woven in with every understanding, that when the woman perceived Jesus to be a prophet, she undertook this question with him: *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.* Jesus knew the schism was great enough already, and was not willing to make the rent wider: and though he gave testimony to the truth by saying, *Salvation is of the Jews, and we know what we worship, ye do not;* yet because the subject of this question was shortly to be taken away. Jesus takes occasion to preach the gospel, to hasten an expedient, and by way of anticipation to reconcile the disagreeing interests, and settle a revelation to be verified for ever. Neither here, nor there by way of confinement, no one country more than another, but wherever any

\* Jose. ant. l. 10. c. 9. διαρρήξιν ἀνθρωπείων ὀστέων ἐν ταῖς ἐοραῖς ποιεῖν.

man shall call upon God in spirit and truth, there he shall be heard.

But all this while the holy Jesus was athirst, and therefore hastens at least to discourse of water, though as yet he got none. He tells her of living water of eternal satisfactions, of never thirsting again, of her own personal condition of matrimonial relation, and professes himself to be the Messiah: And then was interrupted by the coming of his disciples, who wondered to see him alone talk with a woman, besides his custom, and usual reservation. But the woman full of joy and wonder left her water-pot, and ran to the city to publish the Messiah, and immediately all the city came out to see, and *many believed on him upon the testimony of the woman*, and more when they heard his own discourses. They invited him to the town, and received him with hospitable<sup>1</sup> civilities for two days, after which he departed to his own Galilee.

Jesus therefore came into the country, where he was received with respect and fair entertainment, because of the miracles, which the Galileans saw done by him at the feast; and being at Cana where he wrought the first miracle, a noble personage, a little King say some, a Palatine says St. Hierome, a king-like person certainly, came to Jesus with much reverence and desire, that he would be pleased to come to his house, and cure his son now ready to die, which he seconds with much importunity, fearing lest his son be dead, before he get thither. Jesus who did not do his miracles by natural operations, cured the child at distance, and dismissed the prince, telling him his son lived; which by narration of his servants he found to be true, and that he recovered at the same time when Jesus spake these salutary and healing words; upon which accident he and all his house became disciples.

And now Jesus left Nazareth, and came to Capernaum a maritime town, and of great resort, choosing

that for his scene of preaching, and his place of dwelling. For now the time was fulfilled, the office of the Baptist was expired, and the kingdom of God was at hand. He therefore preached the sum of the gospel, faith and repentance. *Repent ye, and believe the gospel.* And what that gospel was, the sum and series of all his sermons afterwards did declare.

The work was now grown high and pregnant, and Jesus saw it convenient to choose disciples to his ministry and service in the work of preaching, and to be witnesses of all, that he should say, do or teach, for ends, which were afterwards made public and excellent; Jesus therefore as he walked by the sea of Galilee called Simon and Andrew, who knew him before by the preaching of John, and now left all, their ship and their net, and followed him. And when he was gone a little farther, he calls the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, and they went after him: and with this family he goes up and down the whole Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diseases, curing demoniacks, cleansing lepers, and giving strength to paralyticks, and lame people.

But, when the people pressed on him, to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth, and presently entering into Simon's ship, commanded him to launch into the deep, and from thence he taught the people, and there wrought a miracle; for being Lord of the creatures he commanded the fishes of the sea, and they obeyed. For when Simon, who had fished all night in vain, let down his net at the command of Jesus, he inclosed so great a multitude of fishes, that the net brake, and the fishermen were amazed, and fearful at so prodigious a draught. But beyond the miracle it was intended, that a representation should be made of the plenitude of the catholic church, and multitudes of believers who should be taken by Simon, and the rest of the disciples, whom by that miracle he consigned to become fishers of men;

who by their artifices of prudence and holy doctrine might gain souls to God, that when the net should be drawn to shore, and separation made by the angels, they and their disciples might be differenced from the reprobate portion.

But the light of the sun uses not to be confined to a province or a kingdom; so great a prophet and so divine a physician, and so great miracles created a fame loud as thunder, but not so full of sadness and presage. Immediately the fame of Jesus went into all Syria, and there came to him multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem and Judea. \* And all that had any sick with divers diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. And when he cured the lunatics and persons possessed with evil spirits, the devils cried out and confessed him to be Christ the Son of God; but he suffered them not, choosing rather to work faith in the persuasions of his disciples by moral arguments, and the placid demonstrations of the Spirit, that there might in faith be an excellency in proportion to the choice; and that it might not be made violent, by the conviction and forced testimonies of accursed and unwilling spirits.

But when Jesus saw his assembly was grown full, and his audience numerous, he went up into a mountain, and when his disciples came unto him he made that admirable sermon called the sermon upon the mount; which is a divine repository of such excellent truths, and mysterious dictates of secret theology, that contains a breviary of all those precepts which integrate the morality of Christian religion; pressing the moral precepts given by Moses, and enlarging their obligation by a stricter sense, and more severe exposition, that their righteousness might exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ; “preach ye perfection, and the doctrines of meekness, poverty

\* Θίμη δ' ὅτις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται ὅντινα πολλοὶ λαοὶ φημίξουσιν. Hesiod.

of spirit, Christian mourning, desire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and toleration of injuries, affixing a special promise of blessing to be the guerdon and inheritance of those graces, and spiritual excellencies. He explicates some parts of the decalogue, and adds appendices and precepts of his own. He teaches his disciples to pray, how to fast, how to give alms, contempt of the world, not to judge others, forgiving injuries, an indifferency and incuriousness of temporal provisions, and a seeking of the kingdom of God, and its appendant righteousness.

When Jesus had finished his sermon, and descended from the mountain, a poor leprous person came and worshipped, and begged to be cleansed; which Jesus soon granted, engaging him not to publish it, where he should go abroad, but sending him to the priest to offer an oblation according to the rites of Moses' law; and then came directly to Capernaum, and taught in their synagogues upon the sabbath days: where in his sermons he expressed the dignity of a prophet, and the authority of a person sent from God, not inviting the people by the soft arguments and insinuations of Scribes and Pharisees, but by demonstrations and issues of divinity. There he cures a demoniac in one of their synagogues, and by and by after going abroad he heals Peter's wife's mother of a fever; insomuch that he grew the talk of all men, and their wonder, till they flocked so to him to see him, to hear him, to satisfy their curiosity, and their needs, that after he had healed those multitudes, which beset the house of Simon, where he cured his mother of the fever, he retired himself into a desert place very early in the morning, that he might have an opportunity to pray, free from the oppressions and noises of the multitude.

But neither so could he be hid, but like a light shining by the fringes of a curtain, he was soon discovered in his solitude, for the multitude found him out, imprisoning him in their circuits and undeniable attendances. But Jesus told them plainly, he must preach

the gospel to other cities also, and therefore resolved to pass to the other side of the lake of Genesareth, so to quit the throng. Whither as he was going, a Scribe offered himself a disciple to his institution; till Jesus told him his condition to be worse than foxes and birds, for whom an habitation is provided, but none for him, no not a place where to bow his head and find rest. And what became of this forward professor afterward, we find not. Others that were probationers of this fellowship, Jesus bound to a speedy profession, not suffering one to go home, to bid his friends farewell, nor another so much as to bury his dead.

By the time Jesus got to the ship it was late, and he heavy to sleep, rested on a pillow and slept soundly, as weariness, meekness, and innocence could make him; insomuch that a violent storm, the chiding of the winds and waters, which then happened, could not awake him; till the ship being almost covered with broken billows, and the impetuous dashings of the waters, the men already sunk in their spirits, and the ship like enough to sink too, the disciples awakened him, and called for help: *Master, carest thou not that we perish?* Jesus arising reproved their infidelity, commanded the wind to be still and the seas peaceable, and immediately there was a great calm, and they presently arrived into the land of the Gergesene, or Gerasenes.

In the land of Gergesites, or Gergesenes, which was there maining name of an extinct people, being one of the nations whom the sons of Jacob drove from their inheritance, there were two cities; Gadara from the tribe of Gad, to whom it fell by lot in the division of the land (which having been destroyed by the Jews,<sup>a</sup> was rebuilt by Pompey, at the request of Demetrius Gadarensis, Pompey's freed man) and near to it was

<sup>a</sup> Joseph. de bel. Jud. l. 1. c. 5. & l. 3. c. 2. & l. 5. c. 3. Epiph. contr. Eb. hæres 30.



Geraka, as Josephus reports: which diversity of towns and names is the cause of the various recitation of this story by the Evangelists. Near the city of Gadara there were many sepulchres in the hallownesses of rocks, where the dead were buried, and where many superstitious persons used Memphitic and Thessalic rites, invoking evil spirits; in so much that at the instant of our Saviour's arrival in the country there met him two possessed with devils from these tombs, exceeding fierce, and so had been long, insomuch that no man durst pass that way.

Jesus commanded the devils out of the possessed persons; but there were certain men feeding swine, which though extremely abominated by the Jewish religion, yet for the use of the Roman armies, and quarterings of soldiers they were permitted, and divers privileges <sup>a</sup> granted to the masters of such herds, and because Gadara was a Greek city, <sup>b</sup> and the company mingled of Greeks, Syrians, and Jews, these last in all likelihood, not making the greatest number; the devils therefore besought Jesus he would not send them into the abyss, but permit them to enter into the swine. He gave them leave, and the swine ran violently down a steep place into the hot baths, which were at the foot of the hill, on which Gadara was built, <sup>c</sup> (which smaller congregation of waters the Jews used to call [sea]) or else, as others think, into the lake of Genesareth, and perished in the waters. But this accident so troubled the inhabitants, that they came, and intreated Jesus to depart out of their coasts. And he did so; leaving Galilee of the Gentiles, he came to the lesser Galilee, and so again to the city of Capernaum.

But when he was come thither he was met by divers Scribes and Pharisees, who came from Jerusalem, and doctors of the law from Galilee; and while they

<sup>a</sup> Cod. Theod. de Suariis.    <sup>b</sup> Joseph. l. 2. de bel Jud. c. 33.

<sup>c</sup> Vt Mare æneum vas templi ad aquarum receptionem.

were sitting in a house, which was encompassed with multitudes, that no business or necessity could be admitted to the door, a poor paralytic was brought to be cured, and they were fain to uncover the tiles of the house, and let him down in his bed with cords in the midst before Jesus, sitting in conference with the doctors. When Jesus saw their faith he said, *Man thy sins be forgiven thee.* At which saying the Pharisees being troubled, thinking it to be blasphemy, and that none but God could forgive sins; Jesus was put to verify his absolution, which he did in a just satisfaction and proportion to their understandings. For the Jews did believe, that all afflictions were punishments for sin; *Who sinned, this man or his father, that he was born blind?* and that removing of the punishment was forgiving of the sin. And therefore Jesus to prove that his sins were forgiven, removed that which they supposed to be the effect of his sin<sup>a</sup> and by curing the palsy prevented their farther murmur about the pardon; *that ye might know the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to the sick of the palsey, arise, take up thy bed, and walk.* And the man arose, was healed, and glorified God.

A while after Jesus went again toward the sea, and on his way, seeing Matthew the publican sitting at the receipt of custom he bade him follow him. Matthew first feasted Jesus, and then became his disciple. But the Pharisees that were with him, began to be troubled, that he eat with publicans and sinners.<sup>b</sup> For the office of publican though among the Romans it was honest, and of great account, and “the flower of the Roman knights, the ornament of the city, the security of the commonwealth, was accounted to consist in the society of publicans,” yet amongst both the<sup>b</sup> Jews and Greeks, the name was odious, and the

<sup>a</sup> Cicero ep. famil. l. 13. & in orat. pro Plancio.

<sup>b</sup> Idem ad Quin. Fratrem de regimine præfecturæ Asiæ.

persons were accursed; not only because they were strangers that were the chief of them, who took into them some of the nation, where they were employed; but because the Jews especially, stood upon the charter of their nation, and the privilege of their religion, that none of them should pay tribute; and also because they exercised great injustices and oppressions, having a power unlimited, and a covetousness wide as hell, and greedy as the fire or the grave. But Jesus gave so fair an account concerning his converse with these persons, that the objection turned to be his apology: for therefore he conversed with them, because they were sinners; and it was as if a physician should be reprov'd for having so much to do with sick persons; for therefore was he sent, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, to advance the reputation of mercy above the rites of sacrifice.

But as the little bubbling and gentle murmurs of the water are presages of a storm, and are more troublesome in their prediction, than their violence: so were the arguings of the Pharisees symptoms of a secret displeasure, and an ensuing war, though at first represented in the civilities of question and scholastical discourses, yet they did but forerun vigorous objections, and bold calumnies which were the fruits of the next summer. <sup>b</sup> “But as yet they discoursed fairly, asking him why John’s disciples fasted often, but the disciples of Jesus did not fast. Jesus told them, it was because these were the days in which the bridegroom was come in person to espouse the church unto himself; and therefore for the children of the bride-chamber to fast then, was like the bringing of a

\* Vita Publicanorum aperta est violentia, impunita rapina, negotiatio nulla ratione constans, inverecunda mercatura. Suidas V. Publicanus. πάντες τελῶναι πάντες εἰσὶν ἄπραγες

Apud Hæbræum textum D. Matthæi publicani dicti Parisim, nomine proprio latronibus qui sepes et maceriam dirimunt, licet propriè dicti Gabbain, unde fortasse Gabella.

<sup>b</sup> Lib. de Solom. c. 5.

dead corpse to the joys of a bride, or the pomps of coronation; the days should come, that the bridegroom should retire into his chamber and draw the curtains, and then they should fast in those days.

While Jesus was discoursing with the Pharisees, Jairus a ruler of the synagogue came to him, desiring he would help his daughter, who lay in the confines of death ready to depart. Whither as he was going, a woman met him who had been diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, without hope of remedy from art or nature, and therefore she runs to Jesus, thinking, without precedent, upon the confident persuasions of a holy faith, that if she did but touch the hem of his garment, she should be whole. She came trembling, and full of hope and reverence, and touched his garment, and immediately the fountain of her unnatural emanation was stopped, and reverted to its natural course and offices. St. Ambrose says, that this woman was Martha. But it is not likely that she was a Jewess, but a Gentile, because of that return, which she made in memory of her cure, and honour of Jesus according to the Gentile rites. For \* Eusebius reports that himself saw at Cæsarea Philippi a statue of brass representing a woman kneeling at the feet of a goodly personage, who held his hand out to her in a posture of granting her request, and doing favour to her; and the inhabitants said it was erected by the care and cost of this woman, adding (whether out of truth or easiness is not certain) that at the pedestal of this statue an unusual plant did grow, which when it was come up to that maturity and height as to arrive at the fringes of the brass monument, it was medicinal in many dangerous diseases; so far Eusebius. Concerning which story I shall make no cen-

\* Lib. 7. hist. c. 14. *Επίσημον Χριστὸ ἄγαλμα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ ἀνδριάντα* apud Sozomen. l. 5. c. 20. Johan. Damasc. de imagin. orat. 3. ex Chronico Johan. Malalæ Antioch. Episc. ait supplicem libellum oblatum Philippo Tetrarchæ Trachonitidis regis, ut liceret statuas erigere in memoriam accepti beneficii.

sure, but this, that since <sup>a</sup> St. Mark and St. Luke affirm that this woman before her cure had spent all her substance upon physicians, it is not easily imaginable how she should become able to dispend so great a sum of money as would purchase two so great statues of bass: and if she could, yet it is still more unlikely that the Gentile princes and proconsuls who searched all places public and private, and were curiously diligent to destroy all honorary monuments of Christianity, should let this alone: and that this should escape not only the diligence of the persecutors, but the fury of such wars and changes as happened in Palestine, and that for three hundred years together it should stand up in defiance of all violences and changeable fate of all things. However it be, it is certain that the book against images published by the command of Charlos the Great eight hundred and fifty years ago, gave no credit to the story: <sup>b</sup> and if it had been true, it is more than probable that Justin Martyr who was born and bred in Palestine, and Origen who lived many years in Tyre in the neighbourhood of the place where the statue is said to stand, and were highly diligent to heap together all things of advantage and reputation to the Christian cause, would not have omitted so notable an instance. It is therefore likely that the statues which Eusebius saw, and concerning which he heard such stories, were first placed there upon the stock of a heathen story or ceremony, and in process of time for the likeness of the figures, and its capacity to be translated to the Christian story, was by the Christians in after ages attributed, by a fiction of fancy, and afterwards by credulity confidently applied to the present narrative.

When Jesus was come to the ruler's house, he found the minstrels making their funeral noises for the death of Jairus's daughter, and his servants had met him,

<sup>a</sup> Mark 5. 26. Luke 8. 3.

<sup>b</sup> Lib. 4. de imagin. c. 11.

and acquainted him of the death of the child ; yet Jesus turned out the minstrels, and entered with the parents of the child into her chamber, and taking her by the hand called her, and awakened her from her sleep of death, and commanded them to give her to eat, and enjoined them not to publish the miracle. But as flames suppressed by violent detentions break out and rage with a more impetuous and rapid motion : so it happened to Jesus, who endeavouring to make the noises and reports of him less popular, made them to be ecumenical ; for not only we do that most greedily, from which we are most restrained, but a great merit enamelled with humility, and restrained with modesty, grows more beauteous and florid, up to the heights of wonder and glories.

As he came from Jairus's house he cured two blind men upon their petition and confession, that they did believe in him, and cast out a dumb devil, so much to the wonder and amazement of the people, that the Pharisees could hold no longer, being ready to burst with envy ; but said, *he cast out devils by help of the devils* : Their malice being, as usually it is, contradictory to its own design, by its being unreasonable ; nothing being more sottish than for the devil to divide his kingdom upon a plot ; to ruin his certainties upon hopes future and contingent. But this was but the first eruption of their malice, all the year last past which was the 'first year of Jesus' preaching, all was quiet, neither the Jews, nor the Samaritans, nor the Galileans did malign his doctrine or person ; but he preached with much peace on all hands, for this was the year which the prophet Isaiah called in his prediction, *the acceptable year of the Lord*.

\* Epiphan. in Panar. lib. 2. tom. 1. hæres. 51.

## Ad. SECT. VIII.

*Considerations upon the Intercourse happening between the holy Jesus, and the Woman of Samaria.*

WHEN the holy Jesus perceiving it unsafe to be at Jerusalem returned to Galilee, where the largest scene of his prophetic office was to be represented, he journeyed on foot through Samaria, and being weary and faint, hungry and thirsty, he sat down by a well, and begged water of a Samaritan woman, that was a sinner, who at first refused him with some incivility of language. But he, instead of returning anger, and passion to her rudeness, which was commenced upon the interest of a mistaken <sup>a</sup> religion, preached the coming of the Messias to her, unlocked the secrets of her heart, and let in his grace, and made a fountain of living water to spring up in her soul, to extinguish the impure flames of lust, which had set her on fire, burning like hell, ever since the death of her <sup>b</sup> fifth husband, she then becoming a concubine to the sixth. Thus Jesus transplanted nature into grace, his hunger and thirst into religious appetites, the darkness of the Samaritan into a clear revelation, her sin into repentance and charity, and so quenched his own thirst by relieving her needs: and as it was meat to him to do his Father's will, so it was drink to him to bring us to drink of the fountain of living water. For thus God declared it to be a delight to him to see us live, as if he were refreshed by those felicities, which he gives to us as communications of his grace, and instances of mercy and consignations to heaven. Upon which we can look with no eye, but such as sees and admires the excellency of the divine charity, which being an emanation from the mercies, and es-

<sup>a</sup> Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, adversus omnes alios hostile odium. *Tacitus.*

<sup>b</sup> Que nubit toties non aubit, adultera lege est,  
Offendor mœchâ simpliciore minus. *Martial.ep.*

sential compassion of eternity, God cannot choose but rejoice in it, and love the works of his mercy, who was so well pleased in the works of his power. He that was delighted in the creation, was highly pleased in the nearer conveyances of himself, when he sent the holy Jesus to bear his image, and his mercies, and his glories, and offer them to the use and benefit of man. For this was the chief of the works of God, and therefore the blessed Master could not but be highlyest pleased with it in imitation of his heavenly Father.

The woman observing our Saviour to have come with his face from Jerusalem, was angry at him upon the quarrel of the old schism. The Jews and the Samaritans had differing rites, and the zealous persons upon each side did commonly dispute themselves into uncharitableness: and so have Christians upon the same confidence, and zeal, and mistake. For although *righteousness hath no fellowship with unrighteousness, nor Christ with Belial*; yet the consideration of the crime of heresy, which is a spiritual wickedness, is to be separate from the person, who is material. That is, no spiritual communion is to be endured with heretical persons, when it is certain they are such, when they are convinced by competent authority and sufficient argument. But the persons of the men are to be pitied, to be reprov'd, to be redargued, and convinc'd, to be wrought upon by fair compliances and the offices of civility, and invited to the family of faith by the best arguments of charity, and the instances of a holy life; *having our conversation honest among them, that they may, beholding your good works, glorify God in the day, when he shall visit them.*<sup>b</sup> Indeed if there be danger, that is, a weak understanding may not safely converse in civil society with a subtle heretic; in such cases they are to be avoided, not saluted: But as this is only, when the danger is by reason of the une-

<sup>a</sup> 1 Pet. 2. 12.<sup>b</sup> 2 Tit. 10. 2 Epist. Joh. 10.



qual capacities, and strengths of the person; so it must be only, when the article is certainly heresy, and the person criminal, and interest is the ingredient in the persuasion, and a certain and a necessary truth destroyed by the opinion. <sup>a</sup> We read that St. John spying Cerinthus in a bath, refused to wash there where the enemy of God and his holy Son had been. This is a good precedent for us, when the case is equal. St. John could discern the spirit of Cerinthus, and his heresy was notorious, fundamental and highly criminal, and the apostle a person assisted up to infallibility. And possibly it was done by the whisper of a prophetic spirit, and upon a miraculous design; for immediately upon his retreat the bath fell down, and crushed Cerinthus in the ruins. But such acts of aversation as these are not easily by us to be drawn into example, unless in the same or the parallel concurrence of equally concluding accidents. We must not quickly, nor upon slight grounds, nor unworthy instances call [heretic,] there had need be a long process, and a high conviction, and a competent judge, and a necessary article, that must be ingredients into so sad and decretory definitions, and condemnation of a person or opinion. But if such instances occur, come not near the danger, nor the scandal. And this advice <sup>b</sup>St. Cyprian gave to the lay people of his diocese. Let them decline their discourses, whose sermons creep and corrode like a cancer, let there be no colloquies, no banquets, no commerce with such, who are excommunicate and justly driven from the communion of the church. <sup>c</sup>“For such persons (as St. Leo descants, upon the apostle’s expression of heretical discourses) creep in humbly, and with small and modest beginnings, they catch with flattery, they bind gently, and kill privily.” Let therefore all persons, who are in danger, secure their persons, and per-

<sup>a</sup> Irenæ. l. 3. c. 3. Euseb. l. 3. c. 13.

<sup>b</sup> lib. 1. ep. 3

<sup>c</sup> Serm. 5. de jejun. decimi Mensis.

suasions by removing far from the infection. And for the scandal, St. Herminigilda gave an heroic example, which in her persuasion, and the circumstances of the age, and action deserved the highest testimony of zeal, religious passion, and confident persuasion. \* For she rather chose to die by the mandate of her tyrant father Leonigildus the Goth, than she would at the paschal solemnity receive the blessed sacrament at the hand of an Arrian bishop.

But excepting these cases, which are not to be judged with forwardness, nor rashly taken measure of, we find that conversing charitably with persons of differing persuasions hath been instrumental to their conversion, and God's glory. The believing wife may sanctify the unbelieving husband, and we find it verified in church story. St. Cecily converted her husband Valerianus; St. Theodora converted Sisinius; St. Monica converted Patricius; and Theodelinda Agilulphus; St. Clotilda persuaded King Clodoveus to be a Christian; And St. Natolia persuaded Adrianus to be a martyr. For they having their conversation honest, and holy, amongst the unbelievers shined like virgin tapers in the midst of an impure prison, and amused the eyes of the sons of darkness with the brightness of the flame. For the excellency of a holy life is the best argument of the inhabitation of God within the soul: and who will not offer up his understanding upon that altar, where a deity is placed as the president, and author of religion? And this very intercourse of the holy Jesus with the woman is abundant argument, that it were well we were not so forward to refuse communion with dissenting persons, upon the easy and confident mistakes of a too forward zeal. They that call heretic may themselves be the mistaken persons, and by refusing to communicate the civilities of hospitable entertainment may shut their doors upon truth, and their windows against

\* Gregor. l. 3. dial. 3. 13.

light, and refuse to let salvation in. For sometimes ignorance is the only parent of our persuasions, and many<sup>d</sup> times interest hath made an impure commixture with it, and so produced the issue.

The holy Jesus gently insinuates his discourses. *If thou hadst known, who it is, that asks thee water, thou wouldest have asked water of him.* Oftentimes we know not the person, that speaks, and we usually choose our doctrine by our affections to the man: but then if we are uncivil upon the stock of prejudice we do not know, that it is Christ that calls our understandings to obedience, and our affections to duty, and compliances. The woman little thought of the glories, which stood right against her. He that sate upon the well had a throne placed above the heads of cherubims. In his arms, who there rested himself, was the sanctuary of rest, and peace, where wearied souls were to lay their heads, and dispose their cares, and there to turn them into joys, and to gild their thorns with glory. That holy tongue, which was parched with heat, streamed forth rivulets of holy doctrine, which were to water all the world, to turn our deserts into paradise. And though he begged water at Jacob's well, yet Jacob drank at his: For at his charge all Jacob's flocks and family were sustained, and by him Jacob's posterity were made honourable and redeemed. But because this well was deep, and the woman had nothing to draw water with, and of herself she could not fathom so great a depth, therefore she refused him, just as we do, when we refuse to give drink to a thirsty disciple. Christ comes in that humble manner of address, under the veil of poverty or contempt, and we cannot see Christ from under that robe, and we send him away without an alms, little considering, that when he begs an alms of us in the instance of any of his poor relatives, he asks of us but to give him occasion to give a blessing for an alms. Thus do the ministers of religion ask support, but when the laws are not more just, then many

of the people are charitable, they shall fare as their master did; they shall preach, but unless they can draw water themselves, they shall not drink; but *si scirent*, if men did but know, who it is that asks them, that it is Christ either in his ministers, or Christ in his poor servants, certainly they could not be so obstructed in the issues of their justice and charity, but would remember that no honour could be greater, no love more fortunate, than to meet with an opportunity to be expressed in so noble a manner, that God himself is pleased to call his own relief.

When the disciples had returned from the town, whither they went to buy provision, they wondered to see the master talking alone with a woman. They knew he never did so before, they had observed him to be of a reserved deportment, and not only innocent, but secure from the dangers of malice, and suspicion in the matter of incontinence. The Jews were a jealous and froward people; and as nothing will more blast the reputation of a prophet than effeminacy and wanton affections; so he knew no crime was sooner objected, or harder cleared than that: Of which, because commonly it is acted in privacy, men look for no probation, but pregnant circumstances, and arguments of suspect: so nothing can wash it off, until a man can prove a negative; and if he could, yet he is guilty enough in the estimate of the vulgar for having been accused. But then because nothing is so destructive of the reputation of a governor, so contradictory to the authority and dignity of his person, as the low and baser appetites of uncleanness, and the consequent shame and scorn, (insomuch that David having fallen into it, prayed God to confirm or establish him *spiritu principali*, with the spirit of a prince, the spirit of lust being uningenuous and slavish) the holy Jesus, who was to establish a new law in the authority of his person, was highly curious so to demean himself, that he might be a person incapable of any such suspicions, and of a temper apt, not only

to answer the calumny, but also to prevent the jealousy. But yet now he had a great design in hand, he meant to reveal to the Samaritans the coming of the Messias, and to this, his discourse with the woman was instrumental. And in imitation of our great master, spiritual persons and the guides of others, have been very prudent and reserved in their societies and intercourse with women. Heretics have served their ends upon the impotency of the sex, and having led captive silly women, led them about as triumphs of lust, and knew no scandal greater than the scandal of heresy, and therefore sought not to decline any, but were infamous in their unwary and lustful mixtures; Simon Magus had his Helena partner of his lust and heresy; The author of the sect of the Nicolaitans (if St. Hierom was not misinformed) had whole troops of women; Marcion sent a woman as his emissary to Rome; Apelles had his Philomene; Montanus, Prisca and Maximilla; Donatus was served by Lucilla, Helpidius by Agape, Priscillian by Galla, and Arrius spreads his nets by opportunity of his conversation with the prince's sister, and first he corrupted her; then he seduced the world.

But holy persons preachers of true religion, and holy doctrines, although they were careful by public homilies to instruct the female disciples, that they who are heirs together with us of the same hope, may be servants in the same discipline, and institution; yet they remitted them to their <sup>a</sup> husbands and guardians to be taught at home. And when any personal transactions concerning the needs of their spirit were of necessity to intervene between the priest and a woman, the action was done most commonly under public test: or if in private, yet with much caution and observation of circumstance, which might as well prevent suspicion, as preserve their innocence. Conversation and frequent and familiar address does too

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 14. 35.

much rifle the ligaments and reverence of spiritual authority, and amongst the best persons is matter of danger. When the cedars of Libanus have been observed to fall, when David and Solomon have been dishonoured, he is a bold man, that will venture further, than he is sent in errand by necessity, or invited by charity, or warranted by prudence. I deny not but some persons have made holy friendships with women: St. Athanasius with a devout and religious virgin, St. Chrysostome with Olympia, St. Hierom with Paula Romana, St. John with the elect lady, St. Peter and St. Paul with <sup>a</sup> Petronilla and Tecla. And therefore it were a jealousy beyond the suspicion of monks and eunuchs to think it impossible to have a chaste conversation with a distinct sex. 1. A pure and right intention; 2. An intercourse not extended beyond necessity, or holy ends; 3. A short stay; 4. Great modesty; 5. And the business of religion, will by God's grace hallow the visit, and preserve the friendship in its being spiritual, that it may not degenerate into carnal affection: And yet these are only advices useful, when there is danger in either of the persons, or some scandal incident to the profession, that to some persons, and in the conjunction of many circumstances are oftentimes not considerable.

When Jesus had resolved to reveal himself to the woman, he first gives her occasion to reveal herself to him, fairly insinuating an opportunity to confess her sins, that having purged herself from her impurity she might be apt to entertain the article of the revelation of the Messias; and indeed a crime in our manners is the greatest indisposition of our understanding to entertain the truth and doctrine of the gospel: especially when the revelation contests against the sin, and professes open hostility to the lust. For faith being the gift of God,<sup>a</sup> and an illumination, the spirit of God will not give this light to them, that pre-

<sup>a</sup> Quam B. <sup>a</sup> Petri filiam naturalem non fuisse rectè probat Baronius.

fer their darkness before it; either the will must open the windows, or the light of faith will not shine into the chamber of the soul. <sup>a</sup> *How can ye believe* (said our blessed Saviour) *that receive honour one of another?* ambition, and faith; believing God, and seeking of ourselves, are incompetent and totally impossible. And therefore Serapion, bishop of Thmvis spake like an angel (saith Socrates) saying, <sup>b</sup> “that the mind, which feedeth upon spiritual knowledge, must throughly be cleansed. The irascible faculty must first be cured with brotherly love and charity, and the concupiscible, must be suppressed with continency and mortification.” Then may the understanding apprehend the mysteriousness of Christianity. For since Christianity is a holy doctrine, if there be any remanent affections to a sin, there is in the soul a party disaffected to the entertainment of the institution, and we usually believe what we have a mind to; <sup>c</sup> Our understandings, if a crime be lodged in the will, being like icterical eyes, transmitting the species to the soul with prejudice, disaffection, and colours of their own framing. If a preacher should discourse, that there ought to be a parity amongst Christians, and that their goods ought to be in common, all men will apprehend, that not princes and rich persons, but the poor and the servants would soonest become disciples, and believe the doctrines, because they are the only persons likely to get by them, and it concerns the other not to believe him, the doctrine being destructive of their interests. Just such a persuasion is every persevering love to a vicious habit, it having possessed the understanding with fair opinions of it, and surprised the will with passion, and de-

<sup>a</sup> John 5. 44.

<sup>b</sup> lib. 4. hist. c. 23.

<sup>c</sup> *Lurida præterea fiunt quæcunque tuentur  
Arquati—  
Multæque sunt oculis in eorum denique mista  
Quæ contagæ suæ palloribus omnia pingunt.*

*Lucret. lib. 4.*

sires, whatsoever doctrine is its enemy, will with infinite difficulty be entertained. And we know a great experience of it in the article of the Messiah dying on the cross, which though infinitely true, yet because to the Jews it was a scandal, and to the Greeks foolishness, it could not be believed, they remaining in that indisposition; that is, unless the will were first set right, and they willing to believe any truth, though for it they must disclaim their interest: Their understanding was blind, because the heart was hardened, and could not receive the impression of the greatest moral demonstration in the world.

The holy Jesus asked water of the woman, unsatisfying water, but promised that himself to them that ask him, would give waters of life, and satisfaction infinite; so distinguishing the pleasures, and appetites of this world from the desires and complacencies spiritual: Here we labour, but receive no benefit; we sow many times, and reap not; or reap, and do not gather in; or gather in, and do not possess; or possess, but do not enjoy; or if we enjoy, we are still unsatisfied, it is with anguish of spirit and circumstances of vexation. A great heap of riches make neither our clothes warm, nor our meat more nutritive, nor our beverage more pleasant, and it feeds the eye, but never fills it, but like drink to an hydropic person increases the thirst and promotes the torment. But the grace of God, though but like a grain of mustard seed, fills the furrows of the heart; and as the capacity increases, itself grows up in equal degrees, and never suffers any emptiness or dissatisfaction, but carries content and fulness all the way, and the degrees of augmentation are not steps and near approaches to satisfaction, but increasings of the capacity; the soul is satisfied all the way, and receives more, not because it wanted any, but that it can now hold more, is more receptive of felicities; and in every minute of sanctification, there is so excellent a condition of joy, and high satisfaction; that the very calamities, the afflictions



and persecutions of the world are turned into felicities by the activity of the prevailing ingredient, like a drop of water falling into a ton of wine, it is ascribed into a new family, losing its own nature by a conversion into the more noble. For now that all passionate desires are dead, and there is nothing remanent that is vexatious, the peace, the serenity, the quiet sleeps, the evenness of spirit and contempt of things below, remove the soul from all neighbourhood of displeasure, and place it at the foot of the throne, whither when it is ascended, it is possessed of felicities eternal. These were the waters, which were given to us to drink, when with the rod of God the rock Christ Jesus was smitten: the Spirit of God moves for ever upon these waters, and when the angel of the covenant had stirred the pool, whoever descends hither, shall find health and peace, joys spiritual and the satisfaction of eternity.

#### THE PRAYER.

O HOLY Jesus, fountain of eternal life, thou spring of joy, and spiritual satisfactions, let the holy stream of blood and water issuing from thy sacred side, cool the thirst, soften the hardness, and refresh the barrenness of my desert soul; that I thirsting after thee, as the wearied hart after the cool stream, may despise all the vainer complacencies of this world, refuse all societies, but such as are safe, pious, and charitable, mortify all sottish appetites, and may desire nothing but thee, seek none but thee, and rest in thee with entire dereliction of my own caitive inclinations; that the desires of nature may pass into desires of grace, and my thirst and my hunger may be spiritual, and my hopes placed in thee, and the expresses of my charity upon thy relatives, and all the parts of my life may speak thy love, and obedience to thy commandments, that thou possessing my soul, and all its faculties during my whole life, I may possess

thy glories in the fruition of a blessed eternity; by the light of thy gospel here, and the streams of thy grace being guided to thee the fountain of life, and glory, there to be inebriated with the waters of paradise, with joy, and love, and contemplation, adoring and admiring the beauties of the Lord for ever and ever, Amen.



### Ad. SECT. XII.

*Considerations of Christ's first Preaching, and the Accidents happening about that Time.*

WHEN John was cast into prison, then began Jesus to preach; not only because the ministry of John by order of divine designation was to precede the publication of Jesus, but also upon prudent considerations, and designs of providence, lest two great personages at once upon the theatre of Palestine might have been occasion of divided thoughts, and these have determined upon a schism, some professing themselves to be of Christ, some of John. For once an offer was made of a dividing question by the spite of the Pharisees, *Why do the disciples of John fast often, and thy disciples fast not?* But when John went off from the scene, then Jesus appeared like the sun in succession to the morning star, and there were no divided interests upon mistake, or the fond adherencies of the followers: and although the holy Jesus would certainly have cured all accidental inconveniences, which might have happened in such accidents, yet this may become a precedent to all prelates to be prudent in avoiding all occasions of a schism, and rather than divide a people, submit and relinquish an opportunity of preaching to their inferiors, as knowing that God is better served by charity, than a homily, and if my modesty made me resign to my inferior, the ad-

vantages of honour to God by the cession of humility are of greater consideration, than the smaller and accidental advantages of better penned and more accurate discourses. But our blessed Lord designing to gather disciples did it in the manner of the more extraordinary persons and doctors of the Jews, and particularly of the Baptist, he initiated them into the institution by the solemnity of a baptism; but yet he was pleased not to minister it in his own person. His apostles were baptized in Johu's baptism, said Tertullian;\* or else, St. Peter was only baptized by his Lord, and he baptized the rest. However, the Lord was pleased to depute the ministry of his servants, that so he might constitute a ministry; that he might reserve it to himself as a specialty to baptize with the spirit, as his servants did with water; that he might declare that the efficacy of the rite did not depend upon the dignity of the minister, but his own institution, and the holy covenant; and lastly, lest they who were baptized by him in person, might please themselves above their brethren whose needs were served by a lower ministry.

The holy Jesus, the great physician of our souls, now entering upon his cure, and the diocese of Palestine, which was afterwards enlarged to the pale of the catholic church, was curious to observe all advantages of prudence for the benefit of souls, by the choice of place, by quitting the place of his education, which because it had been poor and humble was apt to procure contempt to his doctrine, and despiht to his person) by fixing in Capernaum, which had the advantage of popularity, and the opportunity of extending the benefit, yet had not the honour, and ambition of Jerusalem; that the ministers of religion might be taught to seek and desire employment in such circumstances, which may serve the end of God, but not of ambition; to promote the interest of souls, but

\* Lib. de Baptis.

not the inordination of lower appetites. Jesus quitted his natural and civil interests, when they were less consistent with the end of God, and his prophetic office, and considered not his mother's house, and the vicinage in the accounts of religion beyond those other places, in which he might better do his Father's work; in which a forward piety might behold the insinuation of a duty to such persons, who by rights of law and custom were so far instrumental to the cure of souls, as to design the persons; they might do but duty if they first considered the interests of souls, before the advantages of their kindred, and relatives; and although if all things else be alike, they may in equal dispositions prefer their own before strangers; yet it were but reason, that they should first consider sadly, if the men be equal, before they remember that they are of the kindred, and not let this consideration be ingredient into the former judgment. And, another degree of liberty yet there is, if our kindred be persons apt and holy, and without exceptions either of law, or prudence, or religion, we may do them advantages before others, who have some degrees of learning and improvement beyond the other; or else no man might lawfully prefer his kindred, unless they were absolutely the ablest in a diocese or kingdom; which doctrine were a snare apt to produce scruples to the consciences rather than advantages to the cure. But then also patrons should be careful, that they do not account their clerks by an estimate taken from comparison with unworthy candidates, set up on purpose, that when we choose our kindred we may abuse our consciences by saying, We have fulfilled our trust, and made election of the more worthy. In these and the like cases, let every man who is concerned, deal with justice, nobleness, and sincerity, with the simplicity of a Christian, and the wisdom of a man, without tricks and stratagems to disadvantage the church by doing temporal advantages to his friend or family.

The blessed Master began his office with a sermon of repentance, as his decessor John the Baptist did in his ministration, to tell the world that the new covenant, which was to be established by the mediation and office of the holy Jesus, was a covenant of grace and favour, not established upon works, but upon promises, and remission of right on God's part, and remission of sins on our part. The law was a covenant of works, and whoever pravaricated any of its sanctions in a considerable degree, he stood sentenced by it without any hopes of restitution supplied by the law. And therefore it was the covenant of works; not because good works were then required more than now, or because they had more efficacy than now, but because all our hopes did rely upon the perfection of works and innocence without the suppletories of grace, pardon, and repentance. But the gospel is therefore a covenant of grace, not that works are excluded from our duty, or from co-operating to heaven; but that because there is in it so much mercy, that the imperfections of the works are made up by the grace of Jesus, and the defects of innocence are supplied by the substitution of repentance. Abatements are made for the infirmities and miseries of humanity; and if we do our endeavour now after the manner of men, the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, conformity to his laws, and submission to his doctrine, entitles us to the grace he hath purchased for us, that is, our sins for his sake shall be pardoned. So that the law and the gospel are not opposed barely upon the title of faith and works, but as *the covenant of faith*, and *the covenant of works*. In the faith of a Christian works are the great ingredient, and the chief of the constitution, but the gospel is not *a covenant of works*, that is, it is not an agreement upon the stock of innocence without allowances of repentance, requiring obedience in rigour, and strictest estimate. But the gospel requires the holiness of a Christian, and yet after the manner of a man; for, always provided, that

we do not allow to ourselves a liberty, but endeavour with all our strength, and love with all our soul ; that, which if it were upon our allowance would be required at our hands, now that it is against our will, and highly contested against, is put upon the stock of Christ, and allowed to us by God in the accounts of pardon, by the merits of Jesus, by the covenant of the gospel. And this is, the repentance and remission of sins, which John first preached upon the approximation of the kingdom, and Christ at the first manifestation of it, and the apostles afterward in the name of Jesus.

Jesus now having begun his preaching, began also to gather his family ; and first called Simon and Andrew, then James and John, at whose vocation he wrought a miracle, which was a signification of their office, and the success of it ; a draught of fishes so great and prodigious, that it convinced them that he was a person very extraordinary, whose voice the fishes heard, and came at his call ; and since he designed them to become fishers of men, although themselves were as unlikely instruments to persuade men, as the voice of the Son of man to command fishes, yet they should prevail in so great numbers, that the whole world should run after them, and upon their summons come into the net of the gospel ; becoming disciples of the glorious Nazarene. St. Peter the first time that he drew his net, at the descent of the Holy Ghost in Pentecost, caught three thousand men ; and at one sermon sometimes the princes of a nation have been converted, and the whole land presently baptized ; and the multitudes so great, that the apostles were forced to design some men to the ministration of baptism by way of peculiar office ; and it grew to be work enough, the easiness of the ministry being made busy, and full of employment, where a whole nation became disciple. And indeed the doctrine is so holy, the principle so divine, the instruments so supernatural, the promises so glorious, the revelations so

admirable, the rites so mysterious, the whole fabric of the discipline so full of wisdom, persuasion, and energy, that the infinite number of the first conversions were not so great a wonder, as that there are so few now: Every man calling himself Christian, but few having that power of godliness, which distinguishes Christian from a word, and an empty name. And the word is now the same, and the arguments greater, for some have been growing ever since; as the prophecies have been fulfilled, and the sermons more, and the spirit the same, and yet such diversity of operations, that we hear and read the sermons and dictates evangelical, as we do a romance, but that it is with less passion, but altogether as much unconcerned, as with a story of Salmanassar, or Ibrahim Bassa; for we do not leave one vice, nor reject one lust, nor deny one impetuous temptation the more for the four gospels' sake, and all St. Paul's epistles mingled in the argument. And yet all think themselves fishes within Christ's net, and the prey of the gospel; and it is true they are so; for the kingdom is like unto a net, which enclosed fishes good and bad; but this shall be of small advantage, when the net shall be drawn to the shore, and the separation made.

When Jesus called those disciples, they had been fishing all night, and caught nothing; but when Christ bade them let down the net, they took multitudes: to shew to us, that the success of our endeavours is not in proportion to our labours, but the divine assistance, and benediction. It is not the excellency of the instrument, but the capacity of the subject, nor yet this alone, but the aptness of the application, nor that without an influence from heaven, can produce the fruits of a holy persuasion, and conversion. *Paul may plant, and Apollo may water, but God gives the increase.* Indeed when we let down the nets at the divine appointment, the success is the more probable, and certainly God will bring benefit to the place, or honour to himself, or salvation to them that will obey,

or conviction to them that will not: But whatever the fruit be in respect of others, the reward shall be great to themselves. And therefore St. Paul did not say he had profited, *but he had laboured more than they, all*, as knowing the divine acceptance would take its account in proportion to our endeavours and intendments, not by commensuration to the effect, which being without us, depending upon God's blessing, and the co-operation of the recipients can be no ingredients into our account. But this also may help to support the weariness of our hopes, and the protraction and deferring of our expectation, if a laborious prelate, and an assiduous preacher have but few returns to his many cares and greater labours. A whole night a man may labour, (the longest life is no other) and yet catch nothing, and then the Lord may visit us with his special presence, and more forward assistances, and the harvest may grow up with the swiftness of a gourd, and the fruitfulness of olives, and the plaisance of the vine, and the strength of wheat. And whole troops of penitents may arise from the darkness of their graves, at the call of one sermon, even when he please: and till then we must be content, that we do our duty, and lay the consideration of the effect at the feet of Jesus.

In the days of the patriarchs, the governors of the Lord's people were called shepherds; so was Moses, and so was David. In the days of the gospel they are shepherds still, but with the addition of a new appellative, for now they are called fishers; both the callings were honest, humble, and laborious, watchful and full of trouble, but now that both the titles are conjunct we may observe the symbol of an implicit and folded duty. There is much simplicity and care in the shepherd's trade; there is much craft and labour in the fisher's; and a prelate is to be both full of piety to his flock, careful of their welfare; yet because in the political and spiritual sense too, feeding and governing are the same duty, it concerns them



that have cure of souls to be discreet and wary, observant of advantages, laying such baits for the people as may entice them into the nets of Jesus's discipline. *But being crafty I caught you* (saith St. Paul) For he was a fisher too, and so must spiritual persons be fishers to all spiritual senses of watchfulness and care and prudence; only they must not fish for preferment and ambitious purposes, but must say with the King of Sodom, *Date nobis animas, cetera vobis tollite*, which St. Paul renders, *We seek not yours, but you*. And in order to such acquist, the purchase of souls, let them have the diligence, and the craft of fishers, the watchfulness and care of shepherds, the prudence of politics, the tenderness of parents, the spirit of government, the wariness of observation, great knowledge of the dispositions of their people, and experience of such advantages, by means of which they may serve the ends of God, and of salvation upon their soul.

When Peter had received the fruits of a rich miracle in the prodigious and prosperous draught of fishes, he instantly falls down at the feet of Jesus, and confesses himself a sinner, and unworthy of the presence of Christ. In which confession I not only consider the conviction of his understanding by the testimony of the miracle, but the modesty of his spirit, who in his exaltation, and the joy of a sudden and a happy success, retired into humility and consideration of his own unworthiness, lest, as it happens in sudden joys, the lavishness of his spirit should transport him to intemperance, to looser affections, to vanity, and garishness, less becoming the severity and government of a disciple of so great a master. For in such great and sudden accidents men usually are dissolved and melted into joy and inconsideration, and let fly all their severe principles and discipline of manners, till as Peter here did, though to another purpose, they say to Christ, *Depart from me, O Lord*, as if such excellencies of joys like the lesser stars did disappear at the presence of him; who is the fountain of all joys.

regular and just. When the spirits of the body have been bound up by the cold winter air, the warmth of the spring makes so great an aperture of the passages, and by consequence such dissolution of spirits in the presence of the sun; that it becomes the occasion of fevers and violent diseases. Just such a thing is a sudden joy, in which the spirits leap out from their cells of austerity and sobriety, and are warmed into fevers and wildnesses, and forfeiture of all judgment and rigorous understanding. In these accidents the best advice is to temper and allay our joys with some instant consideration of the vilest of our sins, the shamefullest of our disgraces, the most dolorous accident of our lives, <sup>a</sup> the worst of our fears, with meditation of death, or the terrors of doomsday, or the unimaginable miseries of damned and accursed spirits. For such considerations as these, are good instruments of sobriety, and are correctives to the malignity of excessive joys, or temporal prosperities, which like minerals, unless allayed by art, prey upon the spirits, and become the union of a contradiction; being turned into mortal medicines.

At this time Jesus preached to the people from the ship, which in the fancies and tropical discourses of the old doctors signifies the church, and declares that the homilies of order and authority, must be delivered from the oracle; they that preach must be sent, and God hath appointed tutors and instructors of our consciences by special designation, and peculiar appointment; if they that preach, do not make their sermons from the ship, their discourses either are the false murmurs of heretics, and false shepherds, or else of thieves and invaders of authority, or corrupters of discipline and order. For God, that loves to hear us in special places, will also be heard himself by special persons; and since he sent his angels ministers to convey his purposes of old then when the

<sup>a</sup> Simul et quod gaudes et quod times contrahe. *Seneca.*

law was ordained by angels, as by the hands of a mediator, now also he will send his servants the sons of men, since the new law was ordained by the Son of Man, who is the mediator between God and man in the new covenant. And therefore in the ship Jesus preached, but he had first caused it to put off from land, to represent to us, that the ship in which we preach must be put off from the vulgar communities of men \* separate from the people, by the designation of special appointment, and of special holiness, that is, they neither must be common men, nor of common lives, but consecrated by order, and hallowed by holy living, lest the person want authority in destitution of a divine character, and his doctrine lose its energy and power, when the life is vulgar, and hath nothing in it holy and extraordinary.

The holy Jesus in the choice of his apostles was resolute and determined to make election of persons bold and confident (for so the Galileans were observed naturally to be, and Peter was the boldest of the twelve, and a good sword-man, till the spirit of his Master had fastened his sword within the scabbard, and charmed his spirit into quietness) but he never chose any of the Scribes, and Pharisees, none of the doctors of the law, but persons ignorant and unlearned; which in design, and institutions, whose divinity is not demonstrated from other arguments, would seem an art of concealment and distrust. But in this, which derives its rays from the fountain of wisdom, most openly and infallibly, it is a contestation against the powers of the world upon the interests of God, that he who does all the work, might have all the glory, and in the productions in which he is fain to make the instruments themselves, and give them capacity, and activity, every part of the operation, and causality, and effect may give to God the same honour he

\* χαριῖν γὰρ τὸ ὅμοιον πρὸς τὸ ὅμοιον, ὅθεν ἡ μόνος ἱερεὺς ὁ σοφὸς λέγεται, μόνος θεοφιλὴς, μόνος εὐδὸς εὐχαδαί· μόνος γὰρ οἶδε τιμὰν, ὃ τὴν ἀξίαν μὴ συγχέαι τῶν τιμημένων, ἡ ὁ προσημαίνων ἱερεῖον ἑαυτὴν προσάγει. Hieroc. in Pythag.

had from the creation, for his being the only workman; with the addition of those degrees of excellency, which in the works of redemption of man are beyond that of his creation and first being.

### THE PRAYER.

O ETERNAL Jesu, Lord of the creatures, and prince of the Catholic church, to whom all creatures obey in acknowledgement of thy supreme dominion, and all according to thy disposition co-operate to the advancement of thy kingdom, be pleased to order the affairs and accidents of the world, that all things in their capacity may do the work of the gospel, and co-operate to the good of the elect, and retrench the growth of vice, and advance the interests of virtue. Make all the states and orders of men disciples of thy holy institution: Let princes worship thee and defend religion; let thy clergy do thee honour by personal zeal, and vigilancy over their flocks; let all the world submit to thy sceptre, and praise thy righteousness, and adore thy judgements, and revere thy laws, and in the multitudes of thy people within the enclosure of thy nets, let me also communicate in the offices of a strict and religious duty, that I may know thy voice, and obey thy call, and entertain thy holy Spirit, and improve my talents; that I may also communicate in the blessings of the church; and when the nets shall be drawn to the shore and the angels shall make separation of the good fishes from the bad, I may not be rejected, or thrown into those seas of fire, which shall afflict the enemies of thy kingdom, but be admitted into the societies of saints and the everlasting communion of thy blessings and glories, O blessed and eternal Jesu. Amen.





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